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THURSDAY APRIL 16 1998

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I knew he would pull it off
By the wife of Senator George Mitchell page 19



SMILE and avoid cancer
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Chris Woodhead GOOD, LIBERAL TEACHING is best for children NEWS page 20

Final farewell after 81 years ALAN HAMILTON page 3

Orange Order chiefs say no to peace deal

By MARTIN FLETCHER AND ANDREW PIERCE

THE Northern Ireland peace agreement suffered a serious blow last night when leaders of the Province's largest Protestant organisation said they could not recommend the deal without clarification of key issues.



Trimble: setback before crucial meeting

The Grand Orange Lodge expressed great unhappiness about the agreement during a five-hour meeting. But they resisted pressure from hardliners to reject it outright and left open the possibility of reconsidering if the Government allayed their concerns on prisoners, paramilitary disarmament and policing.

Spokesmen for the Orange Order, which has as many as 100,000 members, derided the outcome as a snub for David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist Party leader who negotiated the deal, but it was undoubtedly a setback. The Orange Order provides 100 delegates to the party's 860-member council, which will discuss the issue on Saturday and its views are bound to colour Unionist opinion.

Only four of the Ulster Unionist Party's ten MPs openly support the agreement, and yesterday another came out against it. Martin Smyth, just back from Australia, called it a "staging post" to a united Ireland. The Rev Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party meanwhile described it as "the mother of all treachery" as it launched an all-out campaign to defeat the agreement in the May 22 referendum. The DUP and Bob McCartney's UK Unionist Party account for nearly 40 per cent of the Unionist vote and they hope that a split UUP will give them a majority to render the agreement unworkable. The DUP placed advertise-

ments in local newspapers claiming "the Trimble-Adams agreement" would lead "inevitably to a united Ireland". It also announced rallies across the province, and promised every home a comprehensive document exposing the "deception and lies" of the deal's promoters.

There is widespread concern that the agreement provides for the release of all paramilitary prisoners within two years without guaranteed disarmament — and not only north of the border. Michael Kirby, of the Irish Police Association, said: "Anybody who kills a policeman in the course of his duty should serve his full term. It is an attack on the state itself."

But Tony Blair insisted yesterday that no prisoners would be released from British jails until there was a clear end to violence. "The only circumstances in which there is an early release is if there is a genuine giving up of violence on behalf of all paramilitary groups, no matter what quarter they come from," he told journalists at the end of his holiday in Spain. "Anyone who is released will of course

be released on license so if they offend they will go back inside again. These are very clear rules. That is the whole essence of what we have agreed. People are free to make the case either for Northern Ireland remaining in the UK, or for a united Ireland, provided they do so by non-violent means. That is the absolute underlying principle."

Mr Blair said that Dr Paisley was determined to make the agreement fail and he urged the voters to ignore the naysayers. "I hope very much the people of Northern Ireland will listen to those who have the courage and vision to set out the prospect of success rather than those who are simply sitting there hoping the whole thing will fail," he said. "I hope that people turn away from those voices that are simply always going to say no, that were saying no even before the agreement was even published."

Dr Paisley had earlier declared that the union was facing its greatest threat. The agreement gave Sinn Fein a place in Northern Ireland's government, nationalists a veto over key decisions in the new assembly, and executive powers to a new all-Ireland ministerial council, he said. It required no disarmament and freed terrorist prisoners while the Royal Ulster Constabulary was to be "sacrificed to keep the IRA happy".

But Lord Alderdice, leader of the centrist Alliance Party challenged Dr Paisley to a debate on the agreement, which he described as "one of the first really good things to happen to Northern Ireland in a very long time indeed".

Fighting talk, page 2 A wife's view, page 19



Tony Blair and Gale Booth, his mother-in-law, at the Cordoba home of Paco Peña

Holidaying Blair still at helm

FROM GILES TREMLETT IN MADRID AND ANDREW PIERCE

TONY BLAIR yesterday revealed one of the lighter duties of his Easter break when he wheeled his mother-in-law into the Spanish sunshine hours before they returned to Britain.

Gale Booth sprained an ankle days before the holiday began. Although in a wheelchair, she missed none of the sights as the Prime Minister,

characteristically, took charge and guided her through the narrow streets and plazas.

A refreshed-looking Mr Blair — a late arrival in Spain because of the marathon Northern Ireland peace talks — admitted to one holiday failure. A keen guitarist from his Oxford days, he confessed that, de-

spite the attentions of the flamenco expert Paco Peña, he was still a terrible player.

"The truth of the matter is that my guitar playing is very poor. The one thing I say in my favour is that I am eager to learn," he said after spending three days as a guest at Peña's house in Cordoba.

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Free vote set to legalise gay sex for 16-year-olds

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR and Jack Straw have joined forces to give MPs a free vote in the Commons next month that would guarantee a reduction in the age of consent for homosexuals to 16 by the summer.

The Home Office confirmed yesterday that a Labour backbencher will table an amendment to the Crime and Disorder Bill to bring the age limit in line with heterosexuals. The move by the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary, in partnership with Stonewall, the group set up to campaign for homosexual equality, threatens to put the Government on a collision course with the Church and the House of Lords.

Ann Keen, Labour MP for Brentford and Isleworth, will table the amendment. It will secure a huge majority because of the number of new Labour MPs, but it could face opposition in the Lords where peers will voice concerns that the move could open up young men to exploitation.

All three party leaders will back the change but it will isolate William Hague within the Tory high command. Mr Hague will be one of only a handful of Shadow Cabinet members who will back it.

Last year the European Human Rights Commission ruled that the difference in the age of heterosexual and homosexual consent discriminated

against homosexuals. Mr Straw, a powerful advocate of an equal age of consent, won the argument in Government, with the backing of the Prime Minister, for early legislation.

Opponents included Ann Taylor, Leader of the Commons, and David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, who argued that issue would be best dealt with by a specific vote with legislation in the next Queen's Speech.

The Bishop of Norwich, the Right Rev Peter Nott, who has a seat in the Lords, is expected to speak against the amendment. The Earl of Onslow, a Tory backbench peer, said he would oppose any reduction in the age of consent to 16.

Straw tries to curb prisons watchdog

By RICHARD FORD HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE Home Secretary has warned General Sir David Ramsbotham, the Chief Inspector of Prisons, to stop publicly meddling in policy issues that are beyond his remit. There is anger among ministers at his outspoken views on prisons and immigration.

Jack Straw's attempt to rein in Sir David is made as the chief inspector today publishes a report that is critical of the Government's immigration detention policy.

Mr Straw has told Sir David, who was appointed by the previous Home Secretary, Michael Howard, that if he has concerns about policy matters he should make them

to him privately rather than in the introductions to his inspection reports. "The Home Secretary has marked his card," one official said yesterday. Joyce Quin, the Prisons Minister, is said by government sources to be "incandescent" that, in a series of prison inspection reports, Sir David has highlighted the lack of resources at a time when prison numbers are rising. He has also called for a Director of Women's Prisons and a Director of Young Offenders. "He keeps raising the same concerns when he has been told and knows that the Government is reviewing them all," the Whitehall official said. Sir David also had

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Countess lifts up the veil on the real Ashes

By JOHN GOODBODY

THE ASHES, symbol of the struggle for cricket supremacy between England and Australia, may not contain the remains of an incinerated ball after all. Cricket historians are now being asked to believe that there was a mishearing, and that the urn contains the ashes of a veil belonging to a Melbourne lady.

Rosemary Dowager Countess of Darlington said yesterday that her mother-in-law, Miss Florence Morphy, a Melbourne beauty, had told her that the Ashes consisted of a burnt veil which she had worn when watching the visiting England team in 1883. The Earl of

following year. Stephen Green, the curator of the Lord's Museum, permanent home of the Ashes visited by 40,000 people a year, said: "I have never heard this story before. I must admit veil does sound like ball. But I am slightly surprised that this information has not come to light before."

The term the Ashes was originally coined in The Sporting Times of September 2, 1882, which lamented the death of English cricket, days after Australia defeated England for the first time on English soil. A footnote added: "N.B. The body will be cremated and the ashes taken to Australia."

The MCC, the owners of Lord's, has always accepted that the Ashes were presented to Bligh by a group of

Melbourne ladies, including his future wife, after England won the third Test, taking a 2-1 lead in the series. They were said to have consisted of the remains of a ball or stump placed in a small terracotta urn. However, The Oxford Companion to Australian Cricket details three different accounts of the origin of the Ashes.

No one is certain that the ashes in the urn are those which placed there in 1883. An article in the Cricketer in September 1982 suggested that a housemaid of Lord Darlington had accidentally knocked over the urn and, after throwing away the ashes, replaced the contents with "wood-ash from the fireplace".



The urn: oh, not ball?

Sixty mothers face tests after treatment by HIV midwife

By IAN MURRAY AND TIM JONES

SIXTY mothers may have been put at risk of HIV infection after receiving surgical treatment from a midwife with the virus.

A special telephone line was opened yesterday to reassure thousands of women who gave birth at the three hospitals at which the midwife has worked since 1988. Only 60 are thought to have been at any risk, and all but one of those have been contacted. The sixth is on holiday.

They will all be screened over the next few days — some have already seen specialists — and screening will also be available for their children, but the hospitals have ruled out any possibility that they could have been infected.

The midwife, who is not being named, told the management of the Addenbrooke's NHS Trust in Cambridge that she was HIV positive ten days ago and was immediately suspended from duty. Senior staff then searched the records of the Rosie Maternity Hospital, which is part of the trust, to find out at which deliveries she had assisted, since she began working there in September 1995.

The Princess Alexandra Hospital at Harlow, Essex, where the midwife spent a month on advanced training last December, and the Wexham Park Hospital at Slough, Berkshire, where she was a student between November 1988 and May 1990, were also asked to check.

"We went through the records of around 1,500 women three times to be absolutely sure that we missed no one," John Ashbourne, chief executive of the Addenbrooke's trust, said. "We believe that the risks to the 43 women we found here

are negligible and that there is no risk at all to any of the others."

The Slough hospital found that the midwife took part in surgical treatment of 15 mothers, and two more were identified at Harlow, where the midwife had little contact with patients.

The 60 women had all undergone at least one of three surgical procedures that may be carried out by a midwife during a delivery: giving a local anaesthetic before an epidural; stitching the wound after such an operation; and attaching a clip to the baby's head to monitor its heartbeat.

Although the midwife would have worn gloves, there is a risk that she could have infected patients if she had cut herself.

The Royal College of Midwives said that the risk of infection from midwives was very low, provided adequate safety precautions were taken, and that there was no reason why an infected midwife should not undertake a normal delivery so long as other staff were on hand to carry out surgical procedures if they proved necessary. The college knows of one other case of a midwife in Britain who is infected, but the person has never been identified.

Although there are known to be 22,000 health care workers worldwide infected with the virus, there have been only two reported incidents where they have transmitted it to patients: a dentist in Florida who infected six patients, and an orthopaedic surgeon in France, who infected one. The hotline number for patients, which will be open from 8am to 10pm Monday, is 0800 100 1343

Esquire magazine advertisement featuring a man in a suit and the text: "If you leave your key in your door for a moment you can guarantee that Gazza will turn your room upside down." Steve McManaman Esq, Nick Hornby Esq, Stephen Bayley Esq, Johnny Vaughan Esq. PLUS FREE WORLD CUP MAG.

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Lawyers aim to break housing chain

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Law Society is proposing that mortgage lenders allow more flexible arrangements so that house buyers can go ahead with the purchase of a new home, even if they have not sold their old one.

In its submission to the government review on housebuying, the society yesterday proposed radical reforms aimed at revolutionising the house-buying process by breaking the chains that cause delays and cutting the risk of gazumping. Many lenders are reluctant to allow borrowers to take on a second mortgage or on a new property before the first is sold. So-called open-ended bridging loans tend to be very expensive.

The society also wants government tax incentives to encourage the emergence of stockholding com-

panies that would be ready to step in and buy a home if a buyer withdrew and a chain was at risk of collapse.

The idea is that the Government could promote stockholding in the same way as it lays down criteria for private finance initiatives. Stockholding companies could step in if a buyer withdraws, purchase the property and then offer it for resale.

The sellers might have to accept a lower price but at least they would not lose the purchase of the new house. The benefit for the stockholding company is the investment in the property. The Law Society is on the steering committee of the Government's review and its proposals will be under close scrutiny.

A spokesman for the steering committee said: "The Law Society is closely involved with the govern-

ESTATE AGENTS PURSUE FEE IN COURT

Two estate agents have secured a High Court injunction to ensure they receive their substantial fees from the £12 million sale of one of London's most desirable homes. The court order bans a holding company linked to a bankrupted Indian clothing tycoon from taking the proceeds of the sale of the house, in St John's Wood, into offshore trusts before agreement is reached. Sir David Alliance, the chairman of Coats Vytella, exchanged contracts for the six-bedroom house, complete with swimming pool, in February, but lawyers acting for the two estate agents, FPD Savills and Gleatree, went to the High Court to ensure their fees of £180,000 are paid before any money leaves the country. Trevor Abrahamson, of Gleatree, said the sales brochure alone cost £23,000 to produce.

ment review of conveyancing. This report is all their own work however. It will be closely considered."

The society said: "Over the past 20 years the number and length of chains has increased considerably

and with them the delays and frustration which they cause. To make every house purchase independent of all others would remove a significant cause of delay."

Phillip Sycamore, the Law Society

president, said: "Government research has shown that our system is one of the cheapest. But the media spotlight has been on gazumping and delays and reform is clearly needed." The reforms, if developed, could revolutionise the conveyancing market, he added. "We have thought 'big' and these are the most ambitious proposals we have come up with yet."

The idea of flexible "chain-breaking" finance deals would enable buyers for a short time to own two properties and to pay back the extra cost by extending the repayment period on their new home.

The second idea, for stockholding, was originally floated more than 10 years ago by the Farrand committee on conveyancing, set up by the Government. The view then was that the Government should not intervene to promote stockholding

and that the market should be left to sort out its problems.

An official said: "Economic circumstances have changed and nothing has happened in the market to sort out the problem of chain-breaking since the Farrand report."

The benefit of stockholding companies would be to promote liquidity in the property market, encourage the sale and use of under-used housing stock and provide a new property investment vehicle. The Law Society is also backing the idea of a seller's package that would be prepared before a house is put on the market.

Such a package, which builds on an earlier society initiative, would include a draft contract, a local authority search and basic information about the property so that as soon as a sale is agreed in principle the buyer can exchange contracts.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Teachers' union may strike over action zones

Strike action was threatened by the second-largest teacher union yesterday over the Government's policy to raise school standards in deprived areas.

Plans for 25 Education Action Zones, where businesses will help to run groups of schools, were condemned by the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers. Nigel de Gruchy, the general secretary, said he could not rule out a national strike if the zones tried to change teachers' hours and pay.

The previous day, militant members of the National Union of Teachers at their conference had backed strike action for a shorter working week. Both moves will be seen as a snub to David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, who pleaded with teachers at the NUT on Monday to embrace the Government's initiatives.

"You can be part of a real learning age where inequality and injustice can be set aside," he said.

Ministers are considering bids to run the first five zones from September. Stephen Byers, the School Standards Minister, has referred to them as "test-beds for schools of the next century".

Schools funding

One third of the extra money found for education in the Budget has failed to find its way to schools, the Conservatives claimed yesterday. A survey of English local authorities showed the increase in school funds next year would be £539 m, not the £835 m promised by the Chancellor. Stephen Dorrell, Shadow Education Secretary, said the figures explained widespread teacher redundancies in schools.

Open house

The Lord Chancellor's controversial £650,000 refurbishment of his official residence at Westminster is to be opened to the full gaze of media. Television crews, photographers and reporters will next Monday be allowed to visit the rooms decorated with expensive wallpaper and publicly-owned paintings. They will have access to the River Room, the dining room, the drawing room, the study and the main bedroom.

Demolition man

Buckingham Palace should be destroyed as part of the millennium celebrations to remove Britain's ugliest buildings "blighting the landscape", Barry Sheerman, Labour MP for Huddersfield, said. Mr Sheerman is launching a "millennium destruction challenge", inviting people to name their least favourite buildings that they would like to see torn down and replaced with something "more in keeping with the 21st century".

Elephant dies

A circus elephant died yesterday despite the efforts of firemen and vets to save her. Kenya, 13, suffered internal injuries after being involved in a fight with one of three other circus elephants at the winter base of Moscow State Circus near Grantham, Lincolnshire. She was found on Tuesday, wedged against a wall. Fire crews had to use lifting gear and air bags to raise the 2½-ton African elephant to her feet.

Gill refusal

Westminster Cathedral refused appeals to take down the Stations of the Cross created by Eric Gill, after disclosures that the late artist had sex with two daughters and his sisters. A spokesman for the cathedral said that while there was every sympathy for the victims of abuse, the artistic value of a work had to be separated from the morals of the man who created it.

Fighting talk by the man who likes to say no

By MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

IAN PAISLEY pre-empted one inevitable question at yesterday's press conference to launch his campaign against last week's peace agreement. He remarked that people said he was an old man, that he might not even live to see next month's referendum.

"Well, I want to assure you that I'm in very good health and ready for this battle," he boomed in that great foghorn of a voice. Some of the greatest battles ever fought were fought by leaders much older than me."

Age has certainly not mellowed the man who is revered by his followers as Ulster's most resolute defender, and is denounced by his enemies as a rabble-rousing bigot. He remains the same archetypal no-surrender, not-an-inch-Unionist that he was 30 years ago when he helped to topple Terence O'Neill as Northern Ireland's Prime Minister, for daring to deal with Dublin, or in 1974 when he spearheaded the loyalist strike that destroyed the Sunningdale agreement.

And only a fool would dismiss North Antrim MP and MEP as spent force. "It's

always dangerous to write him off because given an issue there's no one who can campaign as effectively — particularly on a 'no' vote," said Sydney Elliott, an electoral expert at Queen's University.

"You just don't know what kind of sleeping mass there is out there."

But at 72 and silver-haired, Dr Paisley now looks physically less robust. Veteran observers say that his extraordinary rhetorical powers have diminished, along with his authority.

Last Thursday, he held an impromptu press conference at Stormont as the peace talks were reaching their midnight deadline, and he was loudly heckled by just the sort of working-class loyalists who would once have been his followers in the old days.

At yesterday's conference, reporters pointed to posters showing the vast marches he led against the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 and openly questioned his ability to rally such numbers now.

Dr Paisley's 30-year-old son, Ian, insists that his father remains "as energetic as ever, and more dedicated, more



Mr Paisley at home with his wife Eileen. He said: "Some of the greatest battles ever fought were fought by leaders much older than me"

rather than ever before". He says that there is simply no question of his father retiring because "he doesn't see all this as a job — he sees this as a calling".

But Dr Paisley took a

considerable risk in walking away from the peace talks, and, if this campaign flops, his days as a major political force in Northern Ireland could finally be over.

A recent BBC poll showed

that by 42 per cent to 27, Unionists believed the Union was safer in David Trimble's hands. Dr Paisley has three daughters and two sons. One of his daughters, Rhonda, used to be a Belfast councillor and the city's Lady Mayoress, but Ian is the only one of his offspring who is politically active now.

He is a chip off the same ideological block and equally articulate. As his party's justice spokesman he is frequently quoted in print and on the airwaves, but lacks his father's lungpower and charisma.

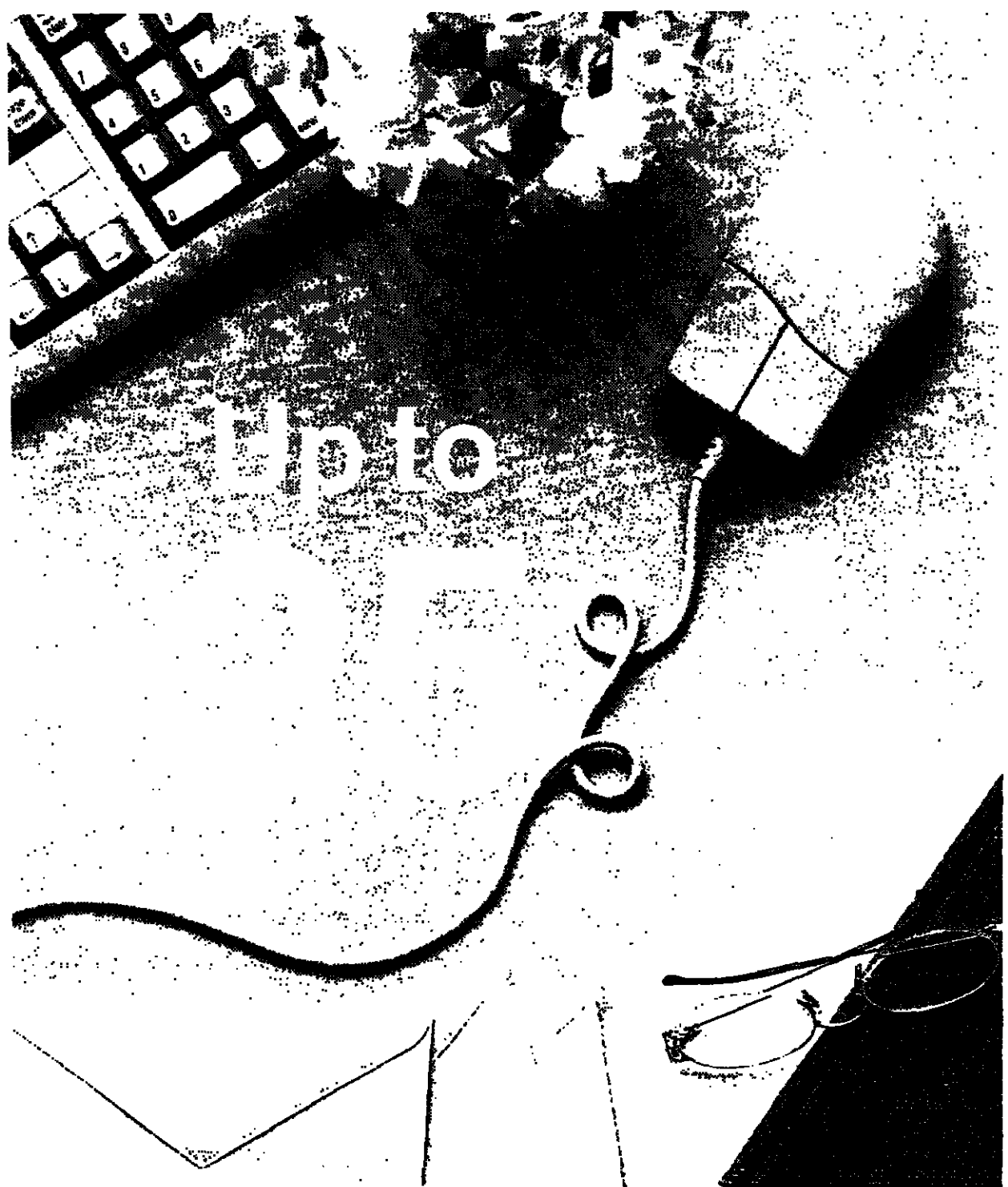
He readily acknowledges that Peter Robinson, the party's deputy leader and second MP, is his father's heir apparent.

Dr Paisley also heads the Free Presbyterian Church

that he founded in 1951 and now has more than 100 congregations around the world. Who would take that job over when the "Big Man" finally goes is less clear.

Ian's twin brother Kyle is a minister in the church's Lowestoft branch in Suffolk, but the choice would be made by the church presbytery.

The senator's wife, page 19



April snow brings misery to motorists

By LIN JENKINS

HEAVY snowfalls in the wake of torrential rain brought misery to many motorists, householders and gardeners yesterday.

Slippery roads saw a spate of minor accidents and motorways, as far south as Surrey, had lanes closed for safety reasons. Police in Cheshire attributed the death of a motorcyclist to the weather. Young children throwing snowballs at traffic from a footpath over the A627 bypass at Oldham, Manchester, are thought to have caused a five-car pile-up which left eight people injured. A lorry driver lost control when snow hit his windscreen, and he then collided with one car. Three other cars were also involved. A 73-year-old man was injured. Wales was worst hit by the snow, with up to a foot falling overnight, but big falls were seen in Scotland, the North-West, parts of the Midlands and even south of the Thames for the first time this winter. Almost an inch was recorded at Gatwick airport.

Weather forecasters said last night that melting snow could cause further flooding.

Photograph and Weather, page 24

Policy clashes over detention centres

Continued from page 1

disagreements with Michael Howard. Mr Howard rebuffed Sir David's attempt to extend his remit and there were confrontations when the former Home Secretary also attempted to stop Sir David discussing prison policy in public.

Today, Sir David's report into conditions at Campsfield House immigration detention centre at Kidlington near Oxford will be published. It includes a 16-page preface that has angered the Home Office by calling for a range of policy changes.

Sir David who has described the existing policy for dealing with asylum seekers and the Immigration Service as a "complete and utter shambles" makes a series of recommendations for sweeping change.

In his preface he calls for the creation of a separate service to hold an estimated 900 immigration detainees. Improved screening of detainees and judicial oversight of immigration detention. Sir David also wants detainees to be given written reasons about why they are being held and for the immigration service to re-examine the criteria and processes of detention.

The Government is to back a tougher attitude in detention centres, including stronger regimes and more control of detainees. It is to accept Sir



Sir David: calls present system a shambles

David's recommendation that a system of rules and regulations be imposed in exchange for agreeing to take part in work, education and other activities.

Sir David says inmates are entitled to minimum standards of food, clothing, bedding, furnishings, heating and light. But he wants extra provision to be awarded to those agreeing to take part in an active regime.

Sir David says: "Compacts should be developed between the individual detainee and the Detention Service giving him or her the opportunity to participate in a wide range of educational, work and leisure activities in return for his or her commitment to abide by the rules of the centre."

Letters, page 21

Patten considers career move to TV

By ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

CHRIS PATTEN is the frontrunner to present a BBC documentary on the rise and fall of the British Empire. The move would effectively mark his retirement from domestic politics.

Friends of Mr Patten have proposed to senior management at the BBC a series with the working title *The Last Empire* — presented by the last Governor of Hong Kong — to mark the millennium. The idea is being given serious consideration. Such a move would signal Mr

Patten's official withdrawal from domestic politics. Last year Mr Patten floated the idea of running for Mayor of London. But it seems certain he will now leave the way clear for Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare to fight it out with Steven Norris, the former Transport Minister, for the Tory nomination.

The prospect of a return to Westminster for Mr Patten, who is completing a book on Asia, also seems unlikely. Friends in the Tory party have urged him not to try to return to Westminster at the next election.

Mr Patten, who is presenting a four-

part series on Asia for the BBC in the summer, said the empire project sounded "extremely interesting. But my first priority is the book and the BBC series on Asia. Who knows what will follow that?"

The series would be completed towards the end of the 1999. Friends believe Mr Patten might then relaunch a career in public service in Brussels. The EU Commission will come up for re-election at the end of 1999.

Mr Patten would only say: "I never rule anything in or rule anything out about political life."

Leading article, page 21

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BT It's good to talk

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Great Military... for men who... left where the...
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Great War soldiers laid to rest at last

Military funeral for men who were left where they fell

FROM ALAN HAMILTON IN MONCHY-LE-PREUX

MORE than 200,000 British and Empire soldiers of the Great War still lie undiscovered beneath the mud of France, deprived of the rites of a Christian burial.

Sometimes modern progress and farming uncovers their remains. Rarely are they identified, their identity rigs of leather or compressed cardboard rotted by the years.

But in 1996 two men who had lain in a mass shallow grave since they fell at the Battle of Arras were identified. Yesterday Privates Frank King and George Anderson of the 13th Royal Fusiliers were finally laid to proper rest with full military honours in the war cemetery at Monchy-le-Preux, close to where they perished on April 11, 1917.

A third soldier was buried with them, a man to whom no name could be given, only a battalion. Buckles and buttons proved that he too had fought in the 13th, and he was accorded the same honour as the others. Blowing wind and driving rain whipped across the flat fields of the Pas de Calais as a procession of hearses brought the three pine coffins, each draped in a Union flag, into the cemetery where 531 British and 23 Canadian dead already lie beneath the simple headstones of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Their burial was attended by the Duke of Kent, Colonel-in-Chief of what is now the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, Dr John Reid, the Armed Forces Minister, Sir Michael Jay, the British Ambassador to Paris, and more than 100 veterans of later wars, many of them Fusiliers come to pay respects to an older generation of their regiment.

The coffins were borne by present-day Fusiliers, most wearing the campaign medals of Northern Ireland and Bosnia, and some of the Gulf. The regiment had not held such a ceremony since it buried its comrades who fell victim to the friendly fire incident in the

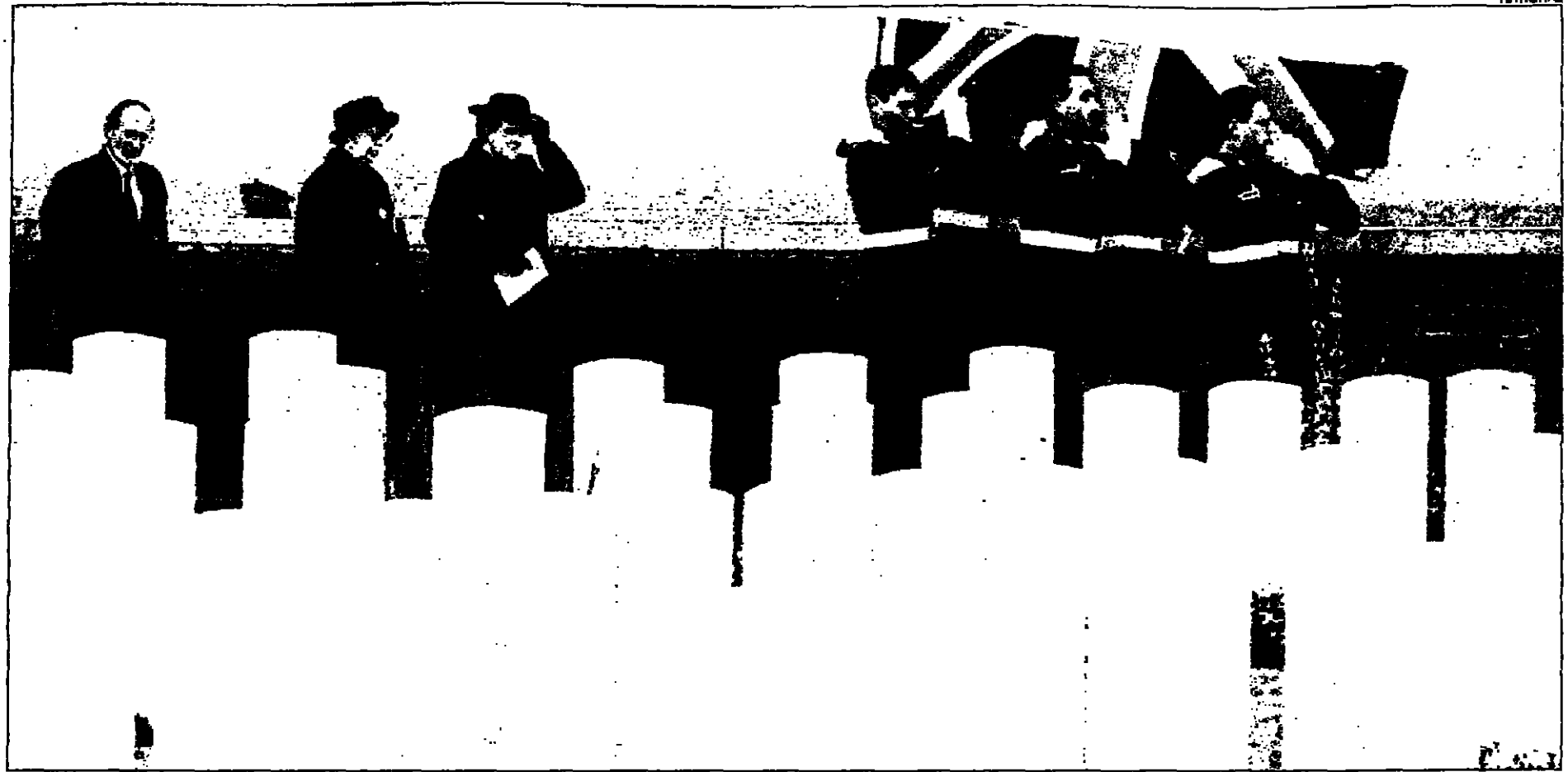
battle to liberate Kuwait. But there were no prouder spectators than a knot of the two fallen men's surviving relatives, traced by genealogists working from sketchy Army records. Until they were contacted, most knew only distantly and vaguely that they had an uncle who died in the Great War. Fourteen members of Private King's family were there, from middle-aged nieces to his ten-year-old great great niece, Kimberley Brown. Their flowers graced the gravesides.

Mandy Stammers, from Saffron Walden, Essex, King's niece, said: "It was a wonderful experience. I feel so proud to have an uncle who fought in such a war. I don't know if he died a hero, but they all did a wonderful job."

For the inscription on King's headstone, his family have chosen: "He gave his life in order to protect the freedom that we enjoy today."

Only two members of Private Anderson's family, his nephew Robin Anderson and his wife Susan, were at the ceremony. "We are the last link in the chain. We knew nothing about him. This has been a unique and moving experience," Mr Anderson said. His uncle's headstone will say: "Now at peace."

From the carnage of the trenches, there are nonetheless



Relatives of Privates King and Anderson walk behind their coffins at the war cemetery in Monchy-le-Preux yesterday. The two bodies were unearthed last year by builders

less remarkable survivors. Harry Wells from Bournemouth, 98, sat in the front row at the burial service. He fought at the same spot in 1918, was gassed, spent two years in hospital and was given at most ten years to live. "I was very lucky," he said.

At the brief service, the singing and prayers were almost blown away on the wind as the congregation huddled under umbrellas and the mud splattered the polished boots and knife-crazed trousers of the bearer parties, in a small reminder of the overriding condition of the Western Front. As a bugler sounded the Last Post at the lowering of the coffins, a 12-man Fusiliers firing party discharged three volleys into the air.

Canon Donald Ruddle, honorary war graves chaplain for the Pas de Calais, said in an address: "As long as one person is still alive whose life is utterly broken by war, it is right that services like this one should continue to be held."

The Battle of Arras began on Easter Monday, April 9 1917, in a blinding snowstorm.

as a diversionary tactic to allow the French to mount an attack further south. Less remembered than the Somme before it or Passchendaele which followed, it still claimed 159,000 British and Empire casualties and between 150,000 and 200,000 German casualties. It moved the front

at one point 3 1/2 miles forward, an astounding distance in trench warfare.

King and Anderson are thought to have been wounded during the successful but costly attempt to take the village of Monchy, which sits on a 90ft hill above the surrounding plain. They are thought to

have died of their wounds at a forward field hospital and their temporary graves were subsequently obliterated as the ebb and flow of fighting further churned the mud.

Their grave was discovered during the building of an unlovely industrial estate close to the village, Alain Jacques,

an archeologist called in by the builders, found a shallow grave containing 27 bodies. Of those, 24 were completely unidentifiable and were buried quietly before Christmas in the Monchy cemetery under headstones bearing Kipling's brief litany for the unidentified: "Known unto God."

King and Anderson came from West London, and in a final act Mrs Maureen Woodriff, mayor of Richmond, laid a wreath on behalf of their native borough before the entire assembly sought refuge and warmth in a *vin d'honneur* given by the mayor of Monchy.



Private King died on April 11, 1917

Priest accused of sex attacks on orphans

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL

A ROMAN CATHOLIC priest sexually abused 17 orphaned boys in his spiritual care and then stood by as they were beaten by nuns with canes, straps and belts for complaining about their ordeal, a court was told yesterday.

Father Eric Taylor had then heard the confessions of his victims, in which they were allegedly forced to admit that they had been lying about him. The boys, some as young as six, who lived at the Father Hudson's Orphanage in Coleshill, Warwickshire, had grown up unable to sustain normal relationships with men or women.

The allegations were made at Warwick Crown Court where Father Taylor, now 78, of Stafford, denies 19 counts of indecent assault on male persons and five counts of buggery.

David Jones, for the prosecution, told the jury that one of the victims, who had since become a Catholic priest, would give evidence as a witness for the prosecution. Mr Jones said that Father Taylor was viewed within the home as a spiritual leader who taught the values of right and wrong. "With his position as priest, he had unassailable authority. Yet he committed mortal sins and committed them on the children."



Taylor denies attacks on boys in his care

a year ago after one of his victims complained to police after inquiries into abuse at children's homes in Wales.

The jury was told that the offences allegedly took place between 1957 and 1965 when Father Taylor was in charge of the orphanage.

Father Taylor would abuse the boys in various circumstances, often when they were enjoying supposed treats. They would be indecently assaulted while on trips in Father Taylor's van or while he was acting as projectionist during a film showing. At other times Father Taylor would allegedly abuse the children while inquiring how they felt when they were confined to bed through

illness. The court was told how one boy, aged six or seven, was abused while travelling with Taylor in his green van, an event which was considered a treat for the children.

"When the sister told him he was going, he said, 'I don't want to go.' The nun beat him for telling untruths and sent him to confession. Who, of course, was in confession but Father Taylor? After confession the boy was beaten again by the nun."

"He was six or seven. He, of course, never complained again. He had no parents to complain to."

Of the children's ordeal, Mr Jones said: "What has happened has affected their lives and their ability to trust people. Many are still consumed by guilt."

On one occasion the priest abused one of his victims during a holiday camp when the boy had won a prize for having the tidiest tent. Mr Jones said the boy was asked to go to Taylor's tent to pick up the prize. "There he was subjected to an act of buggery."

One victim, now 50, told the court he was systematically abused by Taylor from the age of seven. "As far as I was concerned he was a priest," he said. "Who was going to believe me?"

The trial continues.

Lunch jokes left bad taste

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

FEW people were spared offence when a barrister attempted to inject some humour into a charity lunch. The brief address given by David Taylor included jokes about Jewish and black people, police, the elderly, Aids and Alzheimer's patients, and residents of council estates.

Some guests egged him on with laughter but others walked out. Michael McGowan, MEP for Leeds, complained to the Bar Council. Mr Taylor was

found guilty of professional misconduct and warned about his future conduct.

The lunch was held to raise funds for the Martin House hospice for children, near Weirby. Mr Taylor started by saying he had a big nose and that people thought he was a Jew. He said he wasn't a Jew but was saving up to become one.

David Honeybone, a partner in the Leeds-based solicitors Zermansky & Partners, stood up and objected. Mr Taylor turned his attention

to black people, saying that Tony Yeboah, a former Leeds United player from Ghana, had been invited to play for the Irish Republic because his grandfather had eaten an Irish priest.

Mr Taylor said he was looking forward to having Alzheimer's because it meant he would be able to sleep with a different woman every night.

He said afterwards: "No offence was intended and, to my knowledge, none given by harmless remarks."

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IN THE SATURDAY TIMES



PUSH BOYS AS POP STARS in METRO

plus: Carré Otis, Ed McBain, Kirsty Young and Will Self in the MAGAZINE

Vauxhall chief will forgo salary if unions agree deal

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY AND PETER FOSTER

THE Chairman of Vauxhall Motors said yesterday he would forego his £160,000 salary for a year if unions agree a landmark pay and productivity deal to salvage car production at Luton and Ellesmere Port. The gambit by Nick Reilly to forego his pay was condemned by unions as a stunt.

Mr Reilly, 48, said in a personally signed letter to all 10,000 Vauxhall workers that he would sacrifice his salary, all other directors would take a pay cut and senior managers would have their salaries frozen if there was backing from staff for a three-year pay deal that will modernise working practices.

Mr Reilly will, however, continue to benefit from share options and other pay perks believed to be worth about £80,000 a year — and if he strikes a deal with the union, he will reap a huge financial reward as a performance-related bonus.

A Vauxhall spokesman said: "If the deal is done then he will be credited with ensuring the long-term viability of the company in Britain." Last year his pay package was £249,000. Mr Reilly's idea was backed by General Motors, Vauxhall's US parent. Vauxhall would not say how much pay is being cut from the other directors nor how many managers will be caught in the

Chairman's offer aims to keep production at British factories, but unions dismiss it as a stunt

freeze. Tony Woodley, chief negotiator for the T&G general union, said his members would not follow Mr Reilly's action. He said: "This is not the time for gestures. I only wish Vauxhall workers could afford a pay cut like this, but that is categorically not on the agenda."

The company wants to push through a pay deal which will give staff a 2.2 per cent rise for the first year and then an increase in line with inflation for two more years. The deal will demand changes in working practices to ensure more

flexibility and will cut the traditional summer shutdown of the plants.

Workers will be asked to approve the deal in the next few days which Vauxhall hopes will convince its US owner that more investment should come into Britain. The factories are under a cloud because there are no current plans to build a replacement for the Vectra. In order to win confidence from the US, British must cut its costs.

The unions recently warned that if the new version of the Vectra was not to be built here then Luton could close. Mr Reilly warned employees in his letter that the closure of one plant would have wider implications. He said: "If one plant closed, this could affect Vauxhall market share and, therefore, cast doubt over all manufacturing in the UK and jobs in all other Vauxhall departments."

According to corporate lore Mr Reilly underwent an almost damascene conversion before deciding to join General Motors 25 years ago.

Three years after leaving Cambridge with an economics degree Mr Reilly decided that life as a stockbroker in Manchester was not for him.

He took time off from the market and went on a self-imposed retreat in a crofter's cottage up a hill in Llangollen, North Wales, not far from Anglesea where he was born.

He spent four winter months considering his future, only returning to civilisation to play the odd game of rugby.

His wife Susan, a school-teacher at home yesterday in the couple's rented Georgian family home in Leichmore Heath, Hertfordshire, said the period was a turning point in her husband's life. "He read a lot of philosophy and then decided to do something that contributed more to society," she said.

Mr Reilly joined General Motors in 1974 where, after a stint with the Detroit Diesel Allison Division in Northamptonshire, he emerged as a rising star, taking postings all around the world, including GM's headquarters in Detroit.

As manufacturing director of Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port factory in Merseyside Mr Reilly won his reputation for efficiency savings and productivity improvements and in 1993 became the first Briton to be made a vice-president at GM's European headquarters in Zurich.

When he gets the time, which is rare, Mr Reilly still likes to return to the same Welsh hills to walk and think and escape his non-stop schedule.



Nick Reilly: changed careers after winter retreat

Gesture owes more to politics than business

By MARK HENDERSON

BY GIVING up his £160,000 salary, Nick Reilly is making a gesture more in common with the superficial worlds of politics and Hollywood than hard-nosed business.

Profit-related salaries and bonuses have become a regular feature of City contracts, and executives from companies as diverse as BT and Boeing have refused pay rises because of poor results or impending redundancies, but few directors have ever been so bold as to give up all their basic pay.

Gestures of generosity have been more likely to come from the factory floor than the boardroom. When Harold Wilson launched his "I'm Backing Britain" campaign in 1967, five typists at Colt Heating and Ventilation Ltd of Surbiton, Surrey, were inspired to work an extra half-hour a day for no extra money and thousands of other workers followed their example.

The episode hardly offers a panacea for Vauxhall, though. All the campaign eventually produced was a record by Bruce Forsyth and a few advertisements paid for by Robert Maxwell, urging Britons to make sacrifices to help the nation.

Mr Reilly will instead be hoping that his magnanimity brings the spectacular results that followed the Hollywood director James Cameron's decision to waive his fee for his Oscar-winning film *Titanic*. The film went on to become the highest-grossing yet, and Cameron now confesses to feeling like a rug, despite a subsequent payoff.

In the City, self-denial among executives has usually been strictly time-limited. Sir David Rowland, when appointed chairman of Lloyd's in 1993, said that he would not accept any kind of pay rise until he had tackled the £8 billion debts that beset the

underwriters. He was as good as his word, taking only his £450,000 basic salary until he felt able to accept a £400,000 pay rise in September 1996.

Alan Rotherburg, who ran the World Cup in the United States in 1994, refused to accept a salary, but was given a £600,000 payoff when the tournament ended.

It is among politicians that grand salary gestures of the type offered yesterday by Mr Reilly have been perfected. Cabinet ministers took a pay cut in the 1930s when the Great Depression led to mass unemployment, and politicians have since been well aware of the capital to be made from giving up some of the financial benefits of office.

Baroness Thatcher refused to draw her full salary as Prime Minister, insisting instead that she be paid at the same rate as other Cabinet ministers, and Tony Blair recently ordered his Cabinet to give up the substantial pay rises for MPs voted in by the last Government.

One current minister, the beleaguered Paymaster-General and self-made millionaire Geoffrey Robinson, works for no salary at all and Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, frequently points out that he has taken a massive pay cut to enter politics. Although the highest paid Cabinet minister, on £142,508 a year, Lord Irvine regularly earns at least three times that as one of the country's leading barristers.



The typists from Surbiton who backed Britain

Shortage of GPs is expected to worsen

By IAN MURRAY MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN has almost 1,000 unfilled vacancies for GPs, and services to patients will inevitably worsen, doctors leaders said yesterday.

A conference organised by the British Medical Association heard that shortages were acute in some inner-city areas, and that problems of recruitment and retention were beginning to affect all parts of the country.

John Chisholm, chairman of the general medical services committee, said: "Nearly 3,000 overseas doctors keep general practices afloat. Young doctors are not going to be there to replace these doctors, nearly all of whom are due to retire within ten to 15 years."

Low morale, rising patient demands and the conflict between professional and family lives were leading to an increasing number of early retirements from ill health and stress-related illness.

Englishman wins racial abuse case

By MARK HENDERSON

A MAN has been awarded £3,000 compensation after an industrial tribunal ruled that he had been racially harassed for being English at a Northern Ireland factory.

Mark Robins, a 35-year-old machine operator at the Norfil textiles plant in Antrim, was subjected to a campaign of racial abuse on the factory floor, which his bosses did nothing to stop, the tribunal decided. Derogatory comments about his national origin were scrawled on lavatory walls and log books, and he was taunted verbally.

He initially dismissed the harassment as "good-natured banter" when he joined the firm in 1989, but he told the Belfast tribunal: "It really went downhill and became very, very bad."

His complaints about a small number of the factory's 400 workers were ignored by the management. "They did absolutely nothing about it at all," he said.

Mr Robins, who lost an eye in a road accident before arriving in Northern Ireland,

said he was also taunted about his disability, though this was not part of his claim.

The tribunal was the first racial harassment case of any kind to be heard in Northern Ireland, under new regulations introduced last year that made such discrimination illegal in the Province, 30 years after the rest of the United Kingdom. The newly established Commission for Racial Equality for Northern Ireland is currently investigating about 30 other complaints, mostly by workers of Chinese or Asian origin.

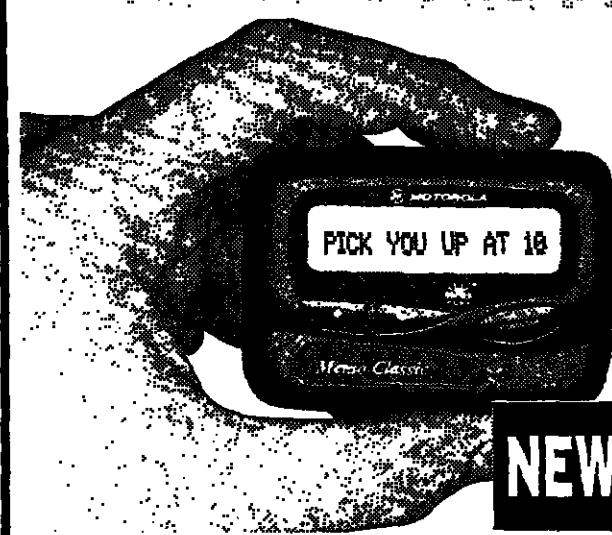
Mr Robins, who is still employed by Norfil but is looking for another job, last night returned to work for the first time since the ruling. "I've been on holiday over Easter, but I go back on shift tonight which is highly scary," he said. "You don't know what kind of reaction you're going to get. I will go and see how things stand."

"I must stress that it was a minority and it's a good place to work. And most Irish people are very, very nice."

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Blinded Cyprus tourist forgives his attackers

A BRITISH tourist blinded in one eye when he was allegedly assaulted by a British United Nations peacekeeper outside a disco in Cyprus said yesterday that he was prepared to forgive his attackers.

Jeremy Caprio, 35, a computer technician from Lancashire, who had only just started a holiday on the Mediterranean island, said that when he realised what had happened to him, he initially wanted revenge. "But then I realised that sitting here shouting and screaming would not do much good," he said from his bed in a clinic in Ayia Napa, where the assault took place. "I'm still hoping I can get my sight back in my right eye but if I can't, I've still got the use of my other eye."

His swollen right eye a crimson red, Mr Caprio said that it helped that he was from a religious family. "I feel sorry for them to have this on their conscience. I'm sure if you brought the guy in here who did it right now, he'd be regretting it. People do strange things when they've had a lot of alcohol." Five soldiers from

Briton savagely beaten outside a nightclub tells his story to Michael Theodoulou and Michael Evans

The 1st Royal Tank Regiment have been arrested although four were later released by Cyprus police. Nearly 300 members of the regiment are serving with the 1,500-man UN force.

Mr Caprio said that one of



Lisa Caprio: she tried to protect her brother

his greatest regrets was that he might now be forced to give up his hobby of racing "old cars", which he did mostly to raise money for charities supporting cancer patients. "I probably won't get my licence back with only one eye."

His sister, Lisa, 23, who had thrown herself on his bloodied body to protect him during the assault, was at his bedside. His fiancée, Jan Galloway, travelled from their home near Blackpool to be with him.

The latest incident further clouds the British Army's reputation in Cyprus, where a few violent and sometimes horrific assaults by soldiers in the past have given the impression that all British servicemen are violent thugs.

The most horrific incident was the kidnapping and battering to death of Louise Jensen, a Danish tour guide,

three years ago. Three soldiers from The Royal Green Jackets, who had been drinking in Ayia Napa, are now serving life sentences in Cyprus.

Although the soldier still being questioned after Tuesday's attack is serving with the United Nations, the severity of the assault persuaded Major-General Angus Ramsay, Commander, British Forces Cyprus, to make Ayia Napa a no-go area for all the 4,000 soldiers and airmen stationed at the two sovereign bases. General Ramsay also announced last night that he had called for a "full analysis" of the incident.

Mr Caprio said: "The last thing I remember is a boot coming into my face. I didn't have a chance, they just started on me." He remembered leaving the disco in Ayia Napa by the stairs. "I got to the top of the stairs and I was attacked for no reason at all by four or five men."

He added: "The next thing I remember is arriving at hospital. I had done nothing to provoke these men at all. I was minding my own business."



Jeremy Caprio talking from his hospital bed. "I feel sorry for them to have this on their conscience," he said

Bath's £75 rugby shirt outstrips all rivals

BY SIMON DE BRUNELLES

AT £75 each, they are the most expensive replica sports shirts on sale in Britain. But football supporters who complain of massive mark-ups on souvenir kit no longer have a monopoly on moaning.

The blue, white and black-striped shirts are identical to those worn by the Bath rugby team when they won the European Cup in January. The shirts are nearly twice the price of normal replicas sold in the club shop; the only visible differences are the sponsors' logos.

The club said that, unlike other replica shirts it sold, these were identical in every respect to those worn by the players in their Heineken Cup victory over the French team Brive in Bordeaux.

Carol Ballinger, a sales assistant, said: "We have already sold 400 of the 600 we ordered. Many have gone to overseas supporters as well as people who come into the shop and we don't anticipate any difficulty selling them all."

The heavy-duty shirts are twice the weight of the normal £40 replicas and have fully embroidered logos instead of woven ones that are then stuck on. Cotton Oxford, the manufacturer that supplies kit to most Premier Division teams, said the shirts were the most expensive replicas sold by any club. Katie Drake of Cotton Oxford said: "The club specified that it wanted exactly the same shirts as those worn by the players, which is unusual." Bath claims the shirts would have cost £95 each if it had decided to maintain its normal profit margins.

Peter Norris, of Bath Supporters' Club, said: "I find £75 an awful lot, but there is a demand for them."

One supporter said: "It is exploiting us because they know dedicated fans will pay that for a so-called one-off — £75 for a shirt, no matter how rare, is absolutely ridiculous."

Bellringer 'hanged himself in belfry'

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

A CORONER has opened an inquest on a bellringer whose body was found in the bell tower of a parish church in a tiny Staffordshire farming community.

A farmer discovered Geoff Birch, 52, at the foot of the belfry of St Luke's Church, in Sheen, where the bachelor was "Captain of Bells" and a committed churchgoer. He had silenced the bells before tying the bell rope around his neck and hanging himself.

He was apparently struck on the head by masonry dislodged from the belfry. Although no note was found near the body, police are treating the death as a suicide.

The clock of the church was stuck fast at ten minutes past eight o'clock, the time of Mr Birch's death, when his body was discovered by William Shand, who looks after the church clock, on the evening of Saturday, April 4. The mechanism had been halted by the dead man's weight.

The death of Mr Birch, who had no immediate family and had moved into the neighbouring village of Warslow 18 months ago, has shocked the community of 200.

The Rev Jack Nicholl, vicar of Longnor, Quarnford and Sheen, said: "The loss of Geoff Birch is a terrible tragedy and the whole community will be very saddened by it. He was a very kind and gentle man. He will be greatly missed by us all."

A friend of the dead man, who was described as quiet and unassuming, said there had appeared to be no warning signs.

Mr Birch worked in a local dairy. The friend said: "He was a highly intelligent man who had a great knowledge and interest in the country and wildlife and gave talks to the local Women's Institute."

The inquest was opened in Stoke-on-Trent on Tuesday and adjourned.

Germany tunes in to Top of the Pops

BY CAROL MIDGLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

GERMANY, more renowned for classical music than its contribution to modern sounds, is to have its own version of Top of the Pops.

German bands and presenters have been working on the first programme at the BBC's Elstree studios. It will be produced by MME, a Hamburg-based company, which struck a deal with the BBC for a series based on the Top of the Pops format including the traditional chart rundown.

Not everyone at the BBC was convinced that the programme would travel well. One employee said: "I don't think this will be a scintillating watch, more a Top of the Pops. Just ask yourself how many famous German bands you can name apart from Kraftwerk and Nena, who sang 99 Red Balloons."

But the deal could be lucrative for BBC Worldwide, the corporation's commercial arm. Chris Cowey, TOTP

programme could be made for any country that wanted the same formula. "I hope this is the first of many collaborations to make Top of the Pops as popular around the world as it is here."

"Germany is one of the most important music markets in the world and the country's broadcasters have extremely discerning tastes regarding programmes like this, so it's a real delight for me that TOTP will make its mark in this major market."

The German version will feature British and American acts as well as native pop talent. The 26-part series will open with a 48-minute special. In a separate three-year deal, the BBC has supplied 620 TOTP programmes from the 1980s and 1990s on licence to a new French cable channel. Top of the Pops began on New Year's Day 1964. It was scheduled for six shows, but has been on air without a break ever since.

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Libraries to be 'people's network'

Blair will answer questions online

BY JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Government is to spend £70 million over the next four years to turn public libraries into a "people's network".

Electronic links will allow information and educational materials to be exchanged at the press of a button, while all 27,000 library staff will be retrained to use the new technology.

Nigel Hawkes on government plans to transform a 19th-century institution

to be made today by Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, as the Government's response to a report by the Library and Information Commission published last year. The Government has accepted the recommendations made by the commission and Mr Smith's response will outline how it intends to implement them.

Libraries are one of Britain's most respected public services, "offering levels of customer usage, satisfaction and brand loyalty that most private-sector organisations can only dream about", today's report will say. Mr Smith's response will be endorsed by the Secretaries of State for

Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Four policy objectives embraced by the Government will be supported by the new initiative: education, public access to knowledge, social inclusion — ensuring that all have access to information; and the modernisation of public services. "A nationwide public libraries IT network will help deliver these objectives," the report concludes.

A major part of the promised £70 million will be spent turning materials already held by libraries into digital form, so that they can form the backbone of a proposed National Grid for Learning. The plan is to

concentrate on material to support "lifelong learning and education in its broadest sense". To achieve that, Mr Smith's response says, the network must provide as broad a range of new and interesting material to as many people as possible. The task is expected to cost £50 million.

Another £20 million will be spent training public librarians to use information technology. A parallel initiative to train teachers and school librarians has already been launched.

The actual hardware — screens and high-capacity links between libraries — are to be left to the private sector, though how

companies will earn a return from the investment is not entirely clear. A limited amount of public money, about £6 million from an existing fund, will be used to finance pathfinder projects at selected libraries to demonstrate the potential of the network.

The Government believes that private investment will be encouraged by the huge educational market opened up by the parallel National Grid for Learning, to which all libraries will be linked by the year 2002. Telecommunications costs are expected to be between £7 million and £15 million a year.

The library plans are part of a wider initiative to be launched by the Prime Minister and published on the Internet.

TONY BLAIR is to become the first British Prime Minister to take questions live on the Internet during an interview with the public.

Questions sent via e-mail from around the world will be answered down the Internet in 45-minute interviews on April 29. Although the questions will be filtered in advance, Downing Street officials said that there would be some opportunity for impromptu inquiries.

If it proves successful, the move is likely to be repeated by Mr Blair and other ministers.

Officials said that this was a natural extension of the Prime Minister's public question-and-answer sessions held before and after the election. Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, took part in his own pioneering "Webcast" during the election campaign last May.

John Major launched the Downing Street Website in 1996 and it is due to be relaunched today, when Mr Blair also announces plans for a £600 million computer investment and training package for schools, libraries, hospitals and GPs. Officials said that the package was the biggest information technology training and investment programme undertaken by a British government.

The Downing Street Website has not been updated since May last year after Labour came to power. Officials would not disclose the contents of the new site — which currently contains the history of Downing Street and a list of Cabinet ministers — but it has already been nicknamed the "people's Website".

Mr Blair's enthusiasm for new technology comes despite his own acknowledged confusion when faced by a computer. He still prefers using handwritten notes rather than the Government's own Agenda computer system which is used by civil servants and ministers.

"He is not a technophobe," an official said. "But he is perfectly open about the fact that he was not educated at a time when computers were widely available in schools."

Scot claims his proper place in Kremlin history

By Shirley English

EFFORTS are being made to restore to Russian history books a little-known 17th-century Scottish clockmaker who was the architect of one of Russia's most potent symbols — the Saviour's Tower at the Kremlin.

The 230ft spire, with green tiles and topped with a red star, stands above the entrance to the Kremlin. It has emerged that the builder was a Scot named Christopher Galloway, from Haddington, East Lothian. It is believed he went to Moscow in 1616 to

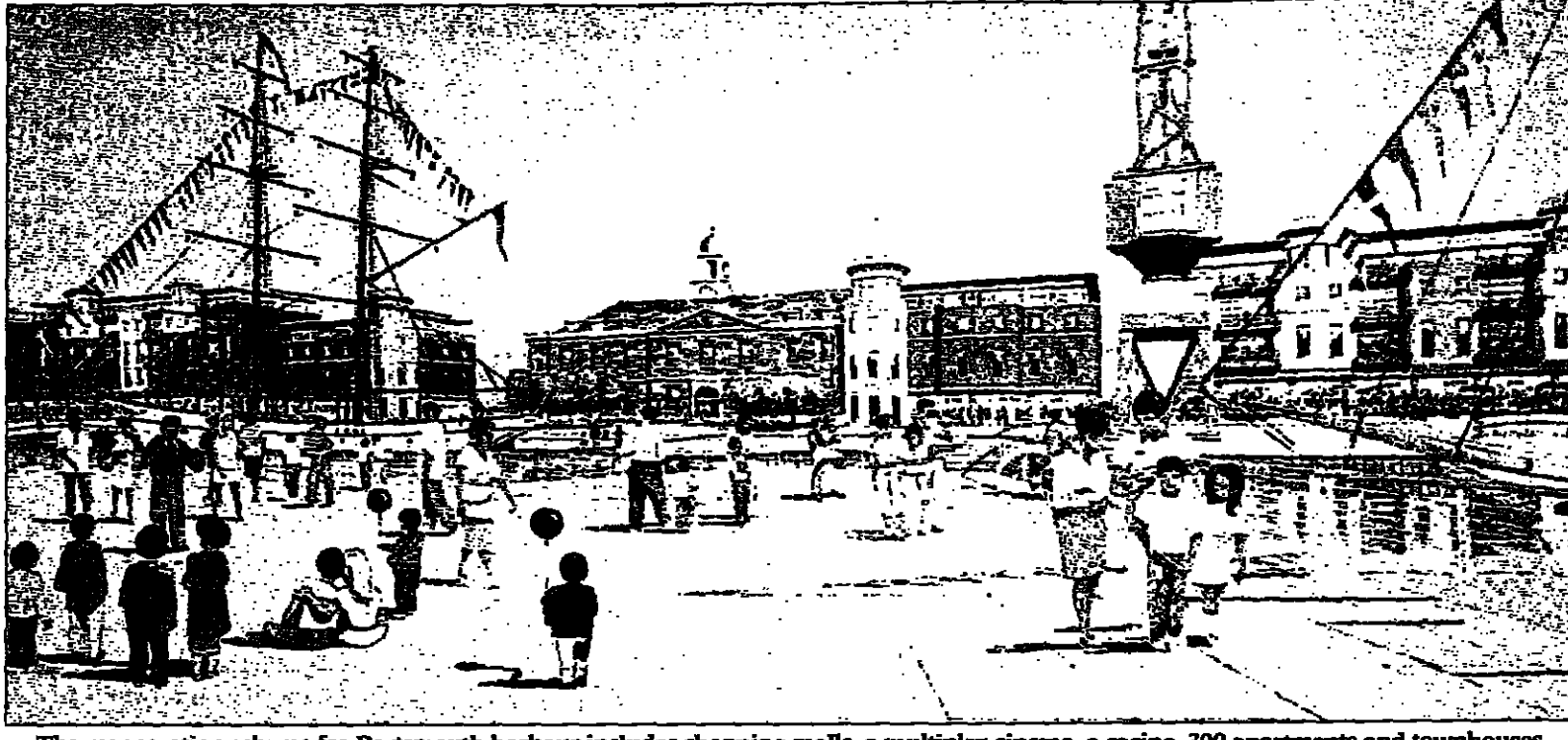
work for Tsar Michael, the first Romanov emperor, in a move by James I and VI to promote relations.

Jeremy Howard, an art historian at St Andrew's University, has spent six years trawling through Russian archives and history books to piece together Galloway's life. He has written *The Scottish Kremlin Builder*, commissioned by the British Council in Moscow, which will be the centrepiece of an exhibition this summer in the Red Square's History Museum.

Dr Howard said: "His contribution seems to have been buried away, yet the Saviour's Tower is one of the best-known symbols of Russia." Galloway had appeared in 19th-century literature about Moscow, but disappeared suddenly during the Soviet era.

During his research Dr Howard found references in 17th and 18th-century documents to a Christopher Galloway or Galloway. In what was presumably an oversight, he appears in the 1950s *Soviet Encyclopaedia* as the architect of the tower.

Despite Dr Howard's research, Galloway remains enigmatic. There are no drawings of him and details of his life in Russia have been lost. All that is known is that he was active in the Imperial Court until 1631.



The regeneration scheme for Portsmouth harbour includes shopping malls, a multiplex cinema, a casino, 300 apartments and townhouses

Anger over £100m plan for Portsmouth

Art experts describe harbour proposals as lamentable, writes Marcus Binney

THE Royal Fine Art Commission has attacked plans for the £100 million millennium regeneration of Portsmouth's historic gunwharf as "lamentable", and has called for a public inquiry.

Once the busiest of all the naval ordnance yards, the gunwharf is a crucial part of the city's ambitious millennium project, the renaissance of Portsmouth harbour, which is aimed at opening the entire perimeter of the harbour to visitors.

Lord St John of Fawsley, the chairman of the commission, said: "The current proposals totally lack a sense of place. They could be anywhere at all, in any suburban housing estate or shopping park. As an

example of development at the time of the millennium, they are simply lamentable. In the commission's view, the architects have failed to rise to the challenge of designing proposals which pay due regard to the historic buildings that will be retained, exploit the magnificent site and link it to the rest of Portsmouth."

The Berkeley Group, working with Lordland, developers of the waterfront in Cape Town, hope to start work this summer. The proposals drawn up by architects Hedley Greentree include

large amounts of shopping in covered malls as well as a multiplex cinema, bowling centre, casino and comedy club, 20 restaurants and bars, and 300 apartments and townhouses. It will also provide a berth for visiting tall ships. The developers are also proposing a 480ft, £20 million millennium tower, part funded by the Millennium Commission, but this is the subject of a separate application.

Unless the proposals are blocked by the Environment Secretary, they are likely to be approved by Ports-

mouth City Council on April 24. English Heritage and the Portsmouth Society have criticised the design of the planned buildings. Celia Clarke, secretary of the Society, said: "This is a conservation area with acres of reusable buildings, but only a handful are to be kept amid a sea of mediocrity."

Roger Lewis, director of the Berkeley Group, said: "The scheme, developed after two years of consultation, has addressed criticisms. Any further delay will jeopardise not only gunwharf quays but the whole millennium scheme for Portsmouth harbour. We must not allow a few dissenting voices, who do not represent the majority, to do this."



The Saviour's Tower in Moscow's Red Square

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Earl calls for £40m Diana fund to be wound up

THE charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, clashed with Earl Spencer yesterday after he suggested that the £40 million fund should be wound up.

The earl believes that his sister would not have approved of its money-making endeavours, despite his decision to open Althorp to the public to benefit the charity. Yesterday he said that he had already borrowed "several millions" to renovate his ancestral home as a tourist attraction, but said it was "ludicrous" to accuse him of profiteering.

He pledged that profits from opening Althorp would go to the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund. But he added: "I do not believe Diana would have wanted it to run forever. She was not really a committee person. She would have been delighted at the way the money has come in, but she would have wanted it to be spent. I do not think the fund should be raising money. I think it should accept the money and distribute it."

The earl said he felt "battered but unbowed" by "absurd" allegations that he was cashing in on his sister's memory, and said that, to prove it, he would make the

Spencer says Princess would have wanted all donations spent, writes Daniel McGrory

Althorp accounts available to the fund, of which Lady Sarah McCorquodale, his sister, is president.

Last night senior figures in the fund said that there were no plans to wind up the charity — expected to raise more than £100 million by the end of this year — because of the continuing flood of donations and merchandising.

Baroness Pikeathley of Caversham, one of the nine trustees, said: "We are not out on the streets raising money. We are accepting donations that people wish to give. You can't just give money away without some administrative structure. You can call it bureaucracy if you like, but you need to monitor how the money is spent."

"No one can say for certain

what the Princess would or would not have wanted, but we are supporting causes dear to her."

Another senior figure in the fund said: "The earl may like to think that, if no one mentions Diana's name, this will all go away. It won't. Her name, and this fund, will build and build and she would have approved of the good it is doing. This fund is unique and none of us knows how long it will last, but I expect it to grow."

The earl told the Northampton *Evening Chronicle* that he was "proud" of what he was doing to commemorate his sister. The pop concert on June 27 in Althorp's grounds, starring Sir Cliff Richard, Shirley Bassey and Wet Wet Wet, would be "a one-off".

He still has not said how much money will go to the charity, but stressed that opening Althorp in July was "not a memorial fund project. It is a Spencer family project."



French customs officers with some of the tablets found in a Belgian lorry about to travel through the tunnel

Record drug haul caught at tunnel entrance

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

FRENCH customs officials yesterday disclosed that a record cache of 358,000 Ecstasy tablets had been found in a lorry about to enter the Channel Tunnel.

The tablets, with a street value of about £1 million, were discovered hidden among canned goods as the Belgian-registered lorry prepared to board a train through the tunnel on March 25.

The seizure was kept secret for three weeks while French and Belgian police attempted to trace the drugs syndicate behind the delivery. The Belgian driver is in custody.

The seizure was more than double the total amount of Ecstasy seized by French authorities in 1997. Ten kilograms (22lb) of cocaine was also found.

Officials said that the Ecstasy had come from The Netherlands or Belgium and was destined for the British market. More than 600 people were arrested in northern France last year on charges of smuggling drugs to Britain.

Shops face upsurge in bomb warnings

By STEWART TENDLER CRIME CORRESPONDENT

BOMB warnings have replaced threats to contaminate food as the main tactic of extortionists against supermarket chains, a national police intelligence conference will be told today.

A report prepared by the National Criminal Intelligence Service shows that there were three threats of food contamination last year compared with totals of more than 20 in previous years. The number of bomb threats or actual devices used against companies reached 27.

Nine of the attacks were by the Mardi Gra bomber. Only two of the remaining threatening letters were followed by an attempt to plant devices; both proved to be hoaxes, according to Detective Sergeant Jill Bailey, head of the NCIS unit covering kidnap and extortion crimes. She will present the figures at an international conference in Coventry today.

MP asks for grant to fight termites

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

AN MP has asked the Government to intervene urgently to prevent an infestation of termites in a West Country house from spreading.

Nicholas Harvey, Liberal Democrat MP for North Devon, asked Hillary Armstrong, the Housing Minister, to authorise an emergency grant to the owner of the infected home. The termites invaded the £250,000 house overlooking Barnstaple Bay at Saunton nearly four years ago, after arriving in a packing case with a plant from southern Europe. They were treated with insecticide but reappeared last month.

Mr Harvey urged Miss Armstrong to treat the problem as a matter of national importance. He said the last Government had refused to give any financial assistance, so the treatments carried out were not the drastic measures needed and the infestation was worse than before.

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Romance is hard work but someone still has to do it

A LOVE story had a happy ending for Angela Lambert yesterday. The twice-divorced grandmother was named romantic novelist of the year for a tale of middle-aged adultery in the modern world.

It was another chapter in the decline of the traditional bodice-ripping yarn of flushed maidens and inevitable happiness. Ms Lambert said: "Love is enormously complicated nowadays — anything from long working-hours to divorce. The circumstances in which people meet are no longer the season, the ball, the local dance."

The Romantic Novelists' Association, which has staged the competition for 38 years, was at pains to shake off its traditional image, emphasising that its writers were working in the tradition of Jane Austen and Thomas Hardy, not Barbara Cartland.

The association lays claim to more than 60 per cent of all books sold. One factor remains unchanged: most of the readers are women.

Ms Lambert, 58, has three children and five grandchildren. Her publicity material makes a point of noting that her first husband left her for a "pert, blonde secretary". She worked for the Earl of Longford in the 1960s and then as a television and newspaper journalist. She has written

Dalya Alberge
on how love-story industry hailed a new heroine of tough reality over escapism

seven books and lives with a television director, Tony Price, in London and France.

After winning the £5,000 prize at the Cafe Royal in London for *Kiss and Kin*, she lamented that some publishers' perception of romantic fiction was still Mills & Boon — "the comic-strip of fiction". Ms Lambert said that romantic fiction was "fiction with big emotions".

It was, she insisted, no longer about a "daddy's virgin finding Mr Right". The readers were no longer desperately seeking escapism. They wanted realism, characters and stories to which they could relate — even if that included divorce, illegitimate children and mistresses.

Angela Arney, who chairs the association, said that romance was just about feelings — making a distinction between works of romantic fic-

tion and mere romance "which you know will have a happy ending". She said: "In the end, all the great stories have a love element. Romantic novels of today have the same emotions as Jane Austen. Nothing has changed."

"Even Mills & Boon is not about heaving bosoms. Most people who accuse them of that have never read one."

Linda Evans, editorial director of Corgi and Black Swan — Ms Lambert's publisher — pointed to the 350 guests, leading publishers and agents, at the reception: "There are no ladies in pink hats and Barbara Cartland is not present."

Ms Lambert was picked from a shortlist of seven: Elizabeth Chadwick, Sarah Harrison, Erica James, Juliette Meade, Agnes Short and Emma Blair. All but one is a woman. Emma Blair is known to his friends and family as Ian Blair.

The genre, the association says, is the most popular kind of reading material, accounting for 61 per cent of books sold. More than 90 per cent of it, said Barbara Bootle, editorial director of Little, Brown, was bought by women.

However much the magazines keep telling us that men are becoming so much more romantic than they used to be, she is yet to be convinced, and



Angela Lambert celebrating her win with Jeffrey Archer, who said: "Isn't War and Peace romantic fiction?"

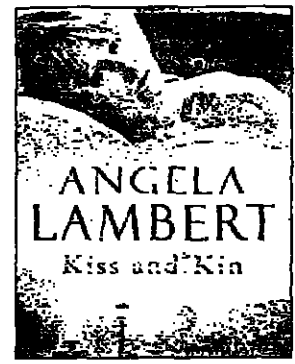
noted how men would simply rather not admit to reading love stories. dw apdlt-wir She said: "They wouldn't want to be seen on the Tube with it. It would destroy their street cred."

The novelist Jeffrey Archer, who presented the prize, insisted that "men are just as romantic as women — if women think they've got it all to themselves, they're wrong." Noting the difficulties of defining romantic fiction, he added: "What does it mean? Isn't War and Peace romantic fiction?"

Books, pages 38, 39

A SMILE, A SIP OF CHAMPAGNE — AND A TONGUE LIKE A CAT

Angela Lambert's *Kiss and Kin* is a thoroughly contemporary novel about an intense love affair between a newly widowed woman and her daughter-in-law's father. There's plenty of sex, and brooding about sex, and a detailed examination of the effects of the central relationship on the protagonists' families. The publisher's blurb says that "this brave and outspoken novel examines the taboos and boundaries of family life, and the destruction that follows when they are ignored". One passage reads: "She smiled her thanks as the waitress moved away and, bending over the glass, inserted the tip of her tongue into the effervescent liquid. Her tongue was as clean and pointed as a cat's. Oliver felt like a Peeping Tom, as though she were doing something much more private and erotic than sipping champagne."



The traditional, spiffing story of a man called Emma



Ian Blair: publishers suggested using woman's name

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

A MORE traditional love story among the runners-up was written by the only male finalist, Ian Blair. He is better known to readers as Emma Blair, because using a woman's name increases his sales.

His novel, *Flower of Scotland*, is set against the backdrop of the Great War, the characters say "spiffing", family solidarity triumphs over tragedy and love transcends class.

Mr Blair, who revealed his true identity on a chat show, was a Shakespearean actor and life-guard from Scotland, who was brought up by an aunt in Milwaukee after his mother died when he was 11. After he wrote a saga novel, his publishers

decided he would sell better as a woman and Emma was born. This supported an assumption that women shy from romantic fiction written by a man. Yet he says "Romantic fiction is simply a novel or a story with a core relationship. That's about it."

His novel includes this passage: "He was quite simply the most gorgeous man she'd ever clapped eyes on. Just the sight of him had the amazing effect of sending a thrill through her entire body, a phenomenon she had never experienced before. She found the inside of her mouth had gone suddenly dry."

Another runner-up, *Airs and Graces*, by Erica James, is a contemporary story of a woman abandoned by her husband when he falls in love

with Provence. She becomes mercenary and decides to remarry for money, tilting her hat at her wealthy lawyer before an artist enters her life.

In real life, Ms James, 37, lives in Cheshire with her two sons, after living in Oxford, Yorkshire and Belgium. She has tried her hand at numerous administrative jobs and worked for an Oxford college and in the explosives supply business. Her novel includes this: "All she had to do was make Duncan believe that he was in charge and, by appearing incapable at times and making herself out to be a loose cannon on deck, this was simplicity itself."

Sarah Harrison, another finalist, is the daughter of an army officer and spent her childhood in Germany, the

Far East and at boarding school, before writing for *Woman's Own* and turning full-time to fiction.

Her novel, *Flowers Won't Far*, is about a wife who has become prepared to overlook her husband's indiscretions after ten years of marriage. Then, by chance, she meets his mistress and the two women form an unlikely friendship that forces them to reassess the man they thought they knew.

The writing includes: "He represented all that Isla liked in Englishmen — the lack of vanity that was itself slightly vain, the solid confidence, the overgrown-schoolboyishness which could be insufferable but which, when combined with intellect and charm, was irresistible."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yacht owner questioned over deaths in rough sea

A yacht owner was arrested and questioned by police yesterday in connection with the deaths of two crew members after the yacht set sail in rough seas.

Three men fell from Colin Jesse's 44ft *Signature* as it listed in the mouth of the Tyne on April 3. Peter Curry and Alan Barwick were swept out to sea and David Knowles suffered head injuries. Northumbria Police said: "The owner was arrested in connection with a possible manslaughter offence and interviewed." He was released on police bail.

Smoking charge

An Australian man was charged with endangering an aeroplane after lighting a cigarette in its lavatory. Scott Stevens, 24, was remanded on bail by magistrates in Crawley, West Sussex, after the incident on March 11.

Ordeal by fire

A supermarket employee was trapped inside his burning store in Kingsbury, northwest London, after robbers splashed petrol around and set it alight. A passer-by forced his way in and rescued the victim via a back door.

Player banned

Henning Berg, 28, the Norwegian international who cost Manchester United £5 million, was banned from driving for a year and fined £1,000 after being caught speeding four times in three months, including twice in a day.

Trust chiefs' pay

Chief executives of NHS trusts received pay rises of 5.2 per cent last year — twice as much as health workers, according to a report by Income Data Services. Basic salaries for chief executives varied from £41,000 to £111,000.

Tank destroyed

A restored Russian tank from the Second World War was destroyed by fire after it was left overnight in a field at Pontypridd, near Cardiff. It was due to be shipped to America. Police want to question a gang of youths.

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Size of tree trunk varies with the tide

By Nigel Hawkes
SCIENCE EDITOR

THE diameter of tree trunks fluctuates with the tides, according to measurements made by scientists from Switzerland, Italy and France.

The finding suggests that the Moon exerts some influence over the water inside tree trunks, controlling its flow between different parts of the tree. It is known that the height of water in boreholes, and the flow of springs, also varies with the tides.

From violent prisoner to happy family man

Britain's most dangerous inmate says reunion with son has changed his attitude, writes Adam Fresco

CHARLES BRONSON, who has spent 21 of the past 25 years behind bars and once threatened to eat a hostage, has pronounced himself the "happiest man in the penal system".

Bronson, 45, who took his name from the star of the *Death Wish* films, revealed his sunny disposition in a letter to a newspaper for prisoners. Writing in *Inside Time*, the man described as Britain's most dangerous prisoner said: "No man in the penal system is happier than me. I go to bed with a smile. I wake up with a smile - that's how I am."

His new-found happiness is thought to be linked to the recent meeting with his son, whom he had not seen for 22 years. Mike Dunroo was three when his mother remarried and his father began the first of his many sentences.

Mr Dunroo was traced and contacted earlier this year by a friend of Bronson, who was worried about his behaviour. As a result Mr Dunroo, 25, a chef from Liverpool, wrote to his father, then in prison in Woolwich, southeast London, saying that he wanted to meet him.

The three fellow inmates with strips of bedding and barricaded them in a cell with him for seven hours at Belmarsh prison, southeast London. He threatened to kill them unless he was given a helicopter, sub-machine guns, a cheese sandwich and ice-cream.

During his years behind bars he is estimated to have carried out more than 20 assaults on prison governors and officers.

Originally jailed for robbery and aggravated burglary, he has received most of his sentences for taking hostages in prison or attacking fellow inmates. He has spent most of his time in solitary confinement because of his great physical strength. He once went two years without seeing the sky.

Formerly known as Michael Gordon Peterson, he has recently been moved to Woodhill prison in Milton Keynes, the Prison Service's new security unit for the most disruptive inmates.

with his long-lost son. He said: "I was on a mission of madness, but now I am on a mission of peace. All I want to do now is get home and have a pint with my son."

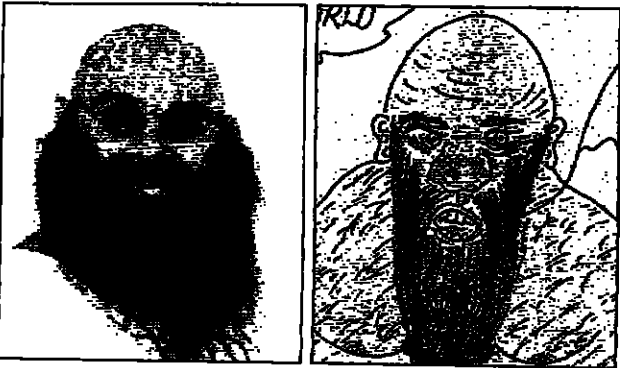
Father and son finally met at Wakefield prison in February and were pictured with their arms around each other. Mr Dunroo said at the time that he thought he looked like his father, "apart from the beard".

Hoping that parole for his father would be sooner rather than later, he said that they planned to open a restaurant together.

Bronson told *Inside Time* how he had been moved 44 times in two years within the prison system. He said: "Wherever I am, I survive. I've not seen a TV in two years, or mixed, or been allowed classes. My whole world is isolation."

"An officer I've known for 20 years worked out that I've spent 21 years in solitary confinement out of 25 inside. I once went two years without seeing the sky, ten years without seeing a TV. I don't smoke, don't mess with drugs. I train hard, press-ups."

A spokesman for the newspaper said that Bronson had written several letters in the past. The publication is produced by New Bridge, a charity that creates links between offenders and the community. The Earl of Longford is one of its trustees.



Bronson and a 1996 self-portrait. He has been in jail for 21 of the past 25 years, often in solitary



Scott Neeson, of 20th-Century Fox, with Scott Murdoch, nephew of the first officer

Film-makers apologise for Titanic error

By Shirley English

THE makers of the Oscar-winning film *Titanic* apologised yesterday to relatives of William Murdoch, the liner's first officer, for portraying him on screen as a cowardly murderer.

Scott Neeson, executive vice-president of 20th-Century Fox, visited Mr Murdoch's home town of Dalbeattie in Kirkcubrightshire where he is remembered as a hero who gave his life to save others.

As a gesture of goodwill, Mr Neeson presented an engraved plaque to Dalbeattie High School and donated £5,000 to the school's Murdoch Memorial Fund, which pays for awards to outstanding pupils.

Mr Murdoch's 80-year-old nephew, Scott Murdoch, was given a mounted dinner plate taken from the set of the film. He said afterwards: "I am very pleased they have admitted a slight error that in the film Murdoch was portrayed as a coward. It was important to clear the name of my uncle."

Mr Neeson said the studio and James Cameron, the film's director, were sorry to have distressed the family. "Dalbeattie has every right to be proud of him. It was never intended to portray him as a coward. He saved a number of lives that night and has always been a hero. But he emphasised that no attempt would be made to alter the film or add an apology to the credits for its video release."

In the film, Murdoch is shown taking bribes from rich passengers and shooting the poor ones fighting to get into lifeboats. As the ship goes down he salutes, puts a gun to his head and pulls the trigger. In real life he is credited

with giving a passenger his lifejacket and helping people to safety before being swept overboard. A granite plaque at the town hall commemorates his bravery.

But Linda Kirkwood, head teacher at Dalbeattie High, spoke of the "grief" the film had caused in the town. "As far as the rest of the world is concerned, as people watch the video and the film, they will continue to believe William Murdoch was a coward who took bribes and shot himself. That is upsetting. This may be their [Fox's] way of trying to keep us a little bit quiet."

Andrew Harrow, 13, a pupil at the high school, who wants to be a journalist, asked Mr Neeson: "If you have admitted William Murdoch was a hero, why portray him as otherwise in the film?"

Mr Neeson said: "He did as much as he could and more than any other officer, apparently, to save lives and I think that was portrayed in the film. Unfortunately it was the other aspects that caused the offence."

Mr Neeson said the studio and James Cameron, the film's director, were sorry to have distressed the family. "Dalbeattie has every right to be proud of him. It was never intended to portray him as a coward. He saved a number of lives that night and has always been a hero. But he emphasised that no attempt would be made to alter the film or add an apology to the credits for its video release."

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William Murdoch, the hero shown as a coward

Eagles' late egg surprises minders

By A Correspondent

ENGLAND'S only pair of wild golden eagles have surprised their minders with a late attempt to nest. Over a week ago it seemed that the couple, who occupy a crag in the Haweswater area of the Lake District, had failed this year. Egg-laying should have been completed by then and watchers were satisfied that none was being incubated.

But since last weekend their activities around their eyrie suggested strongly they were taking turns to sit on an egg. David Hirst, the northern spokesman for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said yesterday: "It isn't absolutely confirmed yet, but their behaviour is exactly as if they are incubating, with the male flying in to the eyrie to take over while the female has a

break," he explained. "Usually this pair lay by the third week of March, so it looks as if they have laid a late clutch. However, it is still earlier than some Scottish eagles, which have been known to not lay until April 19."

He added that the reason for the delay was not known, but there was speculation that it might be linked to the unusual weather, with early spring being colder than the late winter. "Generally their breeding season begins in winter, so it's interesting that their late start coincided with Easter's cold weather."

The pair have been together since 1982, but have been successful only once over the past six breeding seasons. That was in 1996, when they reared one chick.

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Nigel Hawkes on X-rays that show dinosaurs' big fear was tripping up

THE fearsome dinosaurs which ruled the world 100 million years ago had nothing much to fear but falling over. X-ray photographs of fossil skeletons have revealed just the kind of fractures that would have been caused by tripping and crashing to the ground while running flat-out. Bruce Rothschild, an American dinosaur enthusiast, who works at an arthritis centre in Youngstown, Ohio, X-rayed fossils of four-legged theropods, the family of dinosaurs which included *Tyrannosaurus rex*, and found the fractures in ribs from a smaller dinosaur, the three-ton *Allosaurus*.

The results, being presented this week at an exhibition in Philadelphia, show that the large flesh-eating dinosaurs were not the sluggish creatures suggested by some palaeontologists, he told *New Scientist*. Another expert, James Farlow, of Indiana-Purdue University in Fort Wayne, has estimated that *T rex* could not have run faster than about 22mph, because a fall at any greater speed would have been lethal. However, Dr Farlow believes that the new results are consistent with his theory. *Allosaurus* was only about half as big as *T rex*, he says, weighing in at about three tons, and ran with its head closer to the ground. It would probably have survived a fall at a speed that would have killed *T rex*. Theropod means "beast-footed", after their sharply clawed, three-toed feet. Smaller theropods would have been able to race along without much fear of falls. Dr Farlow says: "I suspect that some of those guys would have run like bats out of Hell."



Not as tough as they looked: a 19th-century artist's idea of a *Tyrannosaurus* killing a *Triceratops*. The giants may have been running scared

The lifestyle and habits of *T rex* remain the subject of vigorous argument, partly because so few specimens have been found, and only three exist that are more than half-complete. This has not prevented dinosaur detectives from speculating. Peter Larson, a fossil collector from the Black Hills Institute in Hill City, South Dakota, led the expedition which found the most celebrated of all *T rex* specimens, called Sue, which is 90 per cent complete, and he believes that the female *T rex* was larger than the male.

"The pelvis in the robust form is wider inside, which might be an indication that this form is female," he told *New Scientist*. If so, there are implications for the way *T rex* lived. Throughout nature and con-

trary to many people's expectations, there are many species in which the female is larger than the male. Mr Larson says, because of the advantages for laying eggs or carrying young. "The only time you see males larger is when they have a harem and have to compete for females."

In today's birds of prey, which may be the theropods' descendants, the females are bigger and mate for life. By analogy, says Mr Larson, so may have *T rex*. He is supported by Tom Holz, of the University of Maryland, who points out that Sue was found in what appears to have been a family group, with a male and two young.

This is not the only example of several *T rex* specimens being found close together, he says. If Sue turns out to be female, it will be a happy coincidence. The fossil was given the name after its finder, Sue Hendrickson, before there was any indication of what the sex might have been. It turned out to be an appropriate name in more than one way: ever since the discovery in 1990, people have been suing each other for possession of the world's finest *T rex*.

Sense of direction may be innate

By Nigel Hawkes
SCIENCE EDITOR

HUMAN beings may have an innate sense of direction, an animal behaviourist believes. Victoria Braithwaite, of Edinburgh University, has conducted experiments in which blindfolded student volunteers are taken to places unknown to them. At the end of these mystery tours, they are asked to guess which direction is north and in which direction the university lies.

"I was really impressed by how accurate my results were," she said in a talk at the Edinburgh Science Festival last night. "Eighty per cent of the students got the directions spot on."

Dr Braithwaite believes the ability derives from a built-in magnetic sense, shared with animals. "The theory is that we may have a device inside us which would have been very important when we were hunter-gatherers. We may still have this evolutionary throw-back lying dormant inside us."

Dr Braithwaite picks an overcast day, blindfolds her volunteers and drives them to a strange place. The students have no idea where they are going, or what the experiment is about. When they get out they are asked in turn to point to north and to the university. Those allowed to remove their blindfolds first had a higher success rate. "So it could be said that humans can call on both their internal magnet and the light hitting their eyes to find their way home," she said. "Today our reliance on signposts, maps and landmarks to guide us may have made this magnetic power obsolete."

Ferrets emerge from trouser legs to become designer pets

By Michael Hornsby
AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

FERRETS, once prized as royal rabbit catchers and then as providers of sport for working men, are enjoying a vogue as household pets. Forget smutty music hall jokes about trouser legs. Modern "designer" ferrets, bred to order in a variety of colours, are well on their way to displacing budgerigars and hamsters in the nation's affections. On the other side of the Atlantic, there has been an explosion in the domestic ferret population, with more than five million of the weasel-related

creatures being kept in homes throughout the United States. The fashion is catching on rapidly here. James Wellbeloved, Britain's only manufacturer of ferret food, reckons that the number of owners has doubled over the past three years. "A survey in 1995 put the number at about 250,000," Robin Jackson, the company's marketing director, said. "Based on our sales, we believe that figure has increased now to around 500,000, pointing to a total ferret population of 1.5 million, which would put them on a par with or even ahead of budgies or hamsters in popularity." Enthusiasts say the animals make

excellent pets. Maxine Quill shares her two-bedroom house outside Nottingham with 26 ferrets, nine cats and four dogs. "Ferrets are playful and cleaner than cats or dogs," she said. "We keep them in large birdcages, but allow them to run loose in the house. They can be trained to use a litter tray. You do not need to exercise them, but they can be taken for walks on a leash." *Mustela putorius furo* (Latin for "thieving stinking weasel") belongs to the same family group as the skunk and polecat, and can emit pungent odours during the summer mating season or when frightened. Neutering

the male, or "hob", reduces the smell. Long gone are the days when ferrets came in only two colours — the dark-furred "polecat" variety and the pink-eyed albino. James McKay, a zoologist who runs the National Ferret School near Chesterfield, has pioneered breeding techniques which now offer ferrets in a whole range of hues, including cinnamon, mahogany, copper, silver blue and sealpoint, mirroring the markings of a Siamese cat. While a common-or-garden ferret of traditional hue can be picked up for 50p or less, the "designer" animals have been known to exchange hands for as much as £100 each.



Ferrets are challenging hamsters for nation's affections

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Ministers face rule by ethics watchdog

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

LORD Neill of Bladen, the public standards watchdog, is to investigate whether the country requires a new "sleazebuster" to police the conduct of ministers.

The new study was disclosed yesterday as his Committee on Standards in Public Life opened its formal inquiry into the future of party political funding, at the Methodist Central Hall, Westminster.

The need for such an independent figure to help to guide and advise ministers on potential conflicts of interest has the backing of Sir Richard Wilson, the Cabinet Secretary.

The growing view in government circles is that ministers should no longer turn to their most senior departmental official for advice. Lord Neill told *The Times* that he had visited the office of the Ethics Commissioner in Canada and that he was interested in his work. "This is an area we have to study. An ethics commissioner is a very big job, but we shall return to it in a report after the summer."

Arguments for such an appointment were also raised during yesterday's opening hearing. Peter Riddell, assistant editor and political commentator of *The Times*, said that, if such a figure had existed, Lord Neill would not have been "landed" with resolving the controversy over the £1 million gift given to the Labour Party by Bernie Ecclestone, the Formula One chief. It was Lord Neill who advised the Labour Party to return the donation.

It is still unclear whether Mr Ecclestone will change his mind and face public questioning on the issue. But Sir Stanley Kalms, chairman of the Dixons group and a prominent Tory donor, will face public questioning today.



Riddell: he said more openness was needed



The Committee on Standards in Public Life, under its chairman, Lord Neill of Bladen, right, opens its inquiry into party political funding

Party fundraising and the position of the large donors dominated discussion yesterday. Other areas covered were:

- the pros and cons of funding through the taxpayer;
- a tax credit to encourage more people to participate in democracy;
- the regulation of pressure groups during elections;
- the need to maintain free party political broadcasts on television and radio.

There was also a consensus that the increase in the number of referendums and spending on their campaigns required regulations.

Mr Riddell, the first witness to the inquiry, which is to take

evidence over the next eight weeks, urged the committee to look at the way parties raised their money and not how they spent it. "The Ecclestone affair has underlined the need for openness and transparency. Of course, people have a right to make donations in private, but there is a distinction between donors who give £100 and £10,000 or £1 million."

He also called for the creation of a new independent electoral commission to be able to carry out spotchecks on party accounts to investigate all donations. Such a body, he believed, could be set up as an independent office accountable to Parliament and not to a particular party.

But he was opposed to unconditional state funding for parties, which, he said, would make them "dependent parts of the public sector". He called, however, for more funding for opposition parties to carry out their work in Parliament. The Government had increased the number of political advisers, he said, and had a significant advantage over opposition parties. He was struck by how inadequately opposition spokesmen were supported.

Professor Vernon Bogdanor, Professor of Government at Oxford University, however, believed there should be state funding for parties linked to an index of

party activity, such as number of members. Only public funding could "achieve greater probity in our public life".

He told the committee: "I think it's important that the rights of those people who do not have large sums of money are given equal consideration as the rights of those who do have large sums of money." He also backed greater funding of opposition parties.

Professor Anthony King, a member of the committee, said he believed opposition parties had a role in checking the executive and to find out if ministers had lied, but he needed persuading that the taxpayer should help to fund their preparation for government.

THE MEMBERS

The members of the committee are Sir Clifford Boulton, former Clerk of the Commons; Sir Anthony Cleaver, chairman of AEA Technology; Lord Goodhart, QC, Liberal Democrat peer; Frances Heslop, director of Lazard Bros and the Bank of England; Anthony King, Professor of Government at University of Essex; John MacGregor, Conservative MP and former Cabinet minister; Lord Shore, former Labour MP and Cabinet minister; Sir William Utting, chairman of National Institute for Social Work; Diana Warwick, chief executive, Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals.

Beckett is pressed for answers on Post Office

By James Landale, Political Reporter

LABOUR MPs warned the Government yesterday against a partial sell-off of the Post Office as the Tories accused ministers of dithering over its plans for the organisation.

Officials at the Department of Trade and Industry confirmed that the sale of some shares was one of the options being considered for future financing of the Post Office. They said no decision had been taken and rejected as "speculation" reports that ministers wanted to sell up to 49 per cent of the Post Office in shares to raise £2 billion.

The reports were based on the Government's formal response to a Trade and Industry Select Committee inquiry, which said that ministers were considering "minority share sales" as a possible way to generate funds. Most MPs believe that the DTI has no appetite for a partial sell-off but that Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, is under pressure from the Treasury to leave the option open.

The government review of the Post Office is likely to be published in the autumn. Martin O'Neill, chairman of the Trade and Industry Select Committee, said: "The Treasury have lost the first battle, which was full-scale privatisation. The second stage is whether they can sell off any shares. My own inclination is that it is likely to be a long way down the road."

Bob Laxton, Labour MP for Derby North and a member of the committee, said: "I would be quite hostile to seeing its profits diverted to the dividends of shareholders. But the Post Office must be given the freedom to operate within the private sector and to reinvest its profits in new technology."

John Redwood, Shadow President of the Board of Trade, accused Mrs Beckett of dithering: "She should tell us today how she is going to give the Post Office more commercial freedom, if she is planning to sell shares, and how she will protect the rural post offices. The uncertainty she has created" is "damaging. The Post Office needs to know where it stands, so it can deal with the new competition emerging."

Why new rules are needed for changing political system

A PLAQUE should be put up in the classroom-size Assembly Room at the back of the Methodist Central Hall, because it is there that the rules of the British political system have been, and are being, rewritten.

Three years ago, the first report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, then chaired by Lord Nolan, led to far-reaching changes in the way that the Commons regulates its members and their outside commercial interests, and altered the way in which people are appointed to public bodies. Yesterday the committee, under Lord Neill of Bladen, began holding public hearings on the equally contentious issue of the funding of political parties.

The familiar class-based structure in which the Tories and Labour raised money

from big public companies and trade unions respectively is already fast disappearing. Public companies have been cutting or eliminating their political donations, while the proportion of Labour's national income provided by the unions has fallen from 80 to between 35 and 40 per cent since the mid-1980s.

Instead, both parties have increasingly relied on big donations from wealthy individuals. But are such donations, by definition secret, being made in the hope or expectation of favours and privileged access? That question has been reinforced by worries over the blind trusts that financed the operations of Labour leaders before the election.

At the same time, the Government's

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

ambitious constitutional reforms are raising new questions. Next year's elections to the European Parliament are being conducted by proportional representation on the basis of regional lists of candidates nominated by the parties. A hybrid system of single-member seats and a top-up of additional members elected by PR will be used for the Scottish parliament, Welsh assembly and the new London authority. Since the traditional tight limits on spending in individual constituencies cannot apply, should there be regional or national spending limits?

Similarly, there is growing concern about

the absence of clear rules for referendums, especially since the Government has spent public money on advertising campaigns to boost turnout. That will be particularly important in the referendums likely in the next few years on the voting system for the Commons and on joining a single currency.

The various issues of disclosure, limits on national campaign spending and donations, and any extension to state funding of parties all interact — and all point to the need for a new electoral commission. There is the further twist of the ruling by the European Court of Human Rights in the so-called Bowman case two months ago which struck down the current £5 limit on spending by pressure groups in constituencies. Unless a further limit is enacted soon,

the current restrictions on party spending in local campaigns will be worthless.

The Neill committee's report, likely in the late summer, cannot therefore be sidelined, as the Houghton committee's of two decades ago was. The Government has to act on party funding in the coming winter. My impression from giving evidence at the opening session yesterday was that the committee is both open-minded and well aware of the scale of the job it faces. I compared its task to the labours of Hercules. The key to its work will be devising a new triple-headed Cerberus to monitor and regulate the current revolution in the party system.

PETER RIDDELL

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Graham: win "like a fairy tale"

Publisher Graham wins a Pulitzer

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE Pulitzer Prize for Biography has been won by Katharine Graham, the pioneering publisher of *The Washington Post*. On hearing of the prize — for her first book — a surprised Mrs Graham, 80, said it was "sort of like a fairy tale. Let's be frank at my age to have this happen to you — you have to pinch yourself to make sure it's really happening. This was not even on my wish list".

It was a typical comment from a woman known at the newspaper as both insecure and at the same time authoritative. *Personal History*, chronicling her life from awkward but privileged child in New York to insecure widow, Watergate publisher and beyond, became an immediate bestseller last year; more than 230,000 hardback copies alone were sold.

As much history as biography, the book documents encounters with numerous Presidents, including dancing the twist with President Kennedy. She admitted openly that the most difficult section to write had been that detailing the mental illness and suicide in 1963 of her husband, Philip.

Other winners included Philip Roth, who took the fiction prize for *American Pastoral*, his twenty-second book.

Paraguay murderer executed in US despite protests

BY BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

THE state of Virginia has executed a Paraguayan man despite furious international protests and appeals from his Government, the International Court of Justice in The Hague and Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State.

Angel Francisco Breard, 32, was put to death by lethal injection just before 11pm on Tuesday, two hours after the Supreme Court declined to intervene by six votes to three.

Breard was convicted in 1993 of stabbing and killing Ruth Dickie, 39, during a sexual assault.

The determination of James Gilmore III, Governor of Virginia, to press ahead with the execution aroused international anger because Breard was denied his rights under the Vienna Convention. The convention, signed by more than 130 nations including the US, says that, whenever a citizen of a signatory country is arrested by another signatory, the police must immediately inform the consulate.

However, Breard was not told that he had a right to meet a representative of Paraguay's consul at the time of his arrest and it was three years before his Government learnt from his family of his imprisonment. Paraguay, which saw repeated appeals rejected by US federal and state courts, argued that Breard did not understand the implications of rejecting a plea bargain that would have saved his life.

The International Court of Justice issued a unanimous decision by 15 judges calling on the US to halt the execution while it considered the case.

Ms Albright incurred the anger of conservatives in Congress by calling for a delay.

She fears that the execution will jeopardise the safety of Americans travelling abroad by stripping them of similar protection under the convention. But conservatives such as Senator Jesse Helms have attacked the Administration for surrendering US sovereignty.

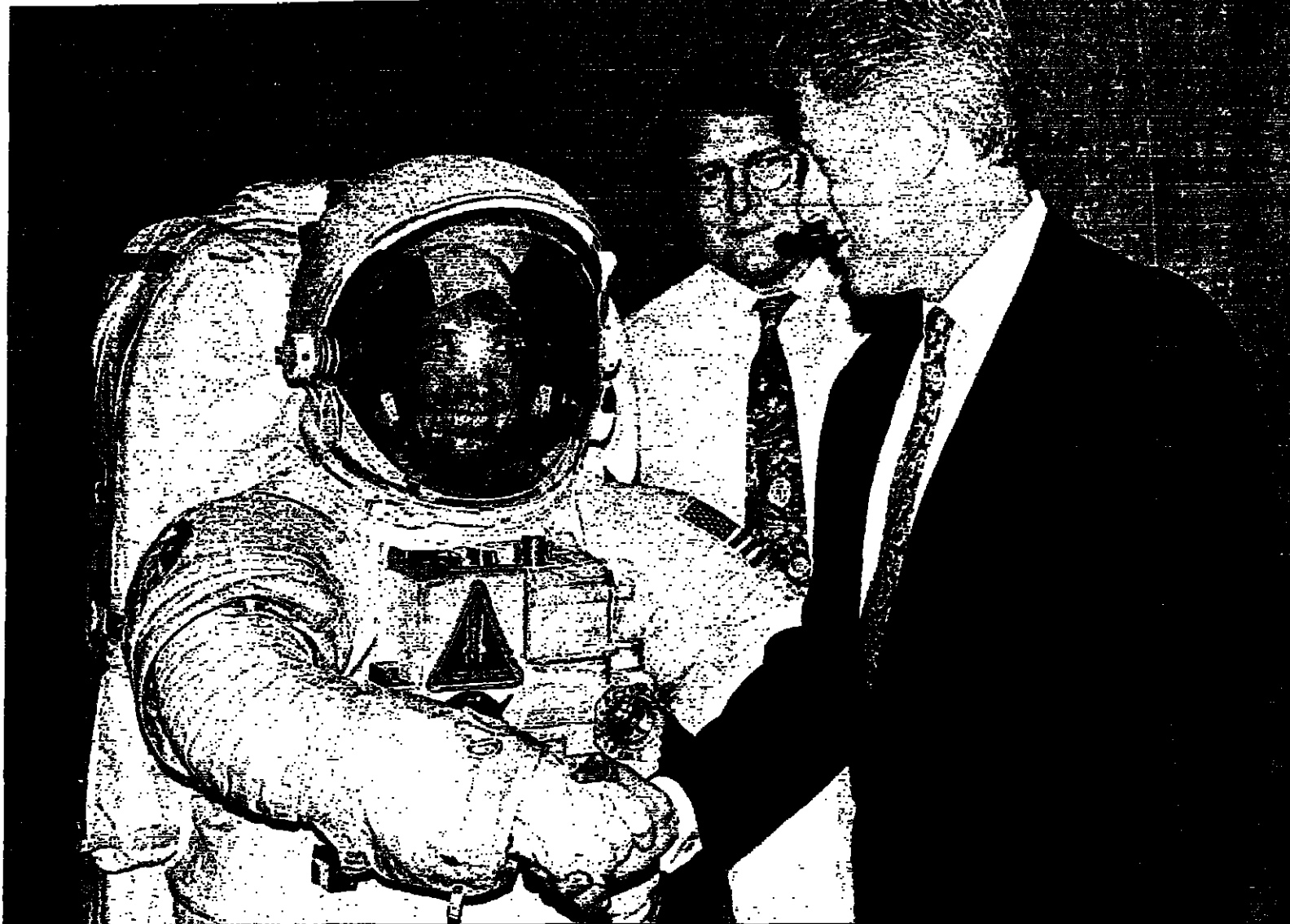
The case throws a spotlight on the contradictions that can be thrown up by America's legal system, which gives state governors and courts enormous independence from Washington and federal courts. Although the Government complies with the Vienna Convention, most arrests are by state, county and city police, who do not.

The case has also drawn more attention to the appeals by the Honduran Government for clemency for a Honduran sentenced to die in Arizona next Wednesday for murdering his wife. Roberto Villafuerte would be the first citizen of his country to be put to death in the US. Honduras says Villafuerte was also not given his rights under the Vienna Convention.

London: The human rights group Fair Trials Abroad accused the United States yesterday of flouting an international treaty by allowing Breard to be executed.

The London-based organization said that the execution threatened international observance of the Vienna Convention and raised the possibility of retaliatory action against Americans and other foreigners arrested abroad.

"Where was the hurry?" Stephen Jakobi, the Fair Trials director, said in a statement. "The execution of the judgment had already been delayed six years." (AP)



President Clinton meets Amy Ross, a spacesuit technician, at Nasa's Johnson Space Centre in Houston. Mr Clinton also met John Glenn, 76, the senator and former astronaut who is returning to space this year, and said America's commitment to space exploration was unquenchable

Demi Moore's jet-set nanny in legal brawl



Moore: says she was defrauded

A NANNY who claims she was "abused and exploited" by Demi Moore has survived an attempt to have her lawsuit against the star thrown out. She now faces a costly legal brawl likely to hinge on questions about weight loss, acne and a pair of diamond earrings.

Kim Tannahill, 32, of Idaho, has been at loggerheads with Ms Moore and her husband, Bruce Willis, since they dismissed her last year claiming she had defrauded them and broken a promise not to talk about their private lives. Her own privacy is also in shreds: acquaintances have described her as a dumpy ex-waitress transformed by her former boss into a svelte but ungrateful jet-setter with her own dreams of stardom.

Sued by the Hollywood power couple for \$300,000 (£180,000) in damages, Ms Tannahill hit back in January with a counter-suit depicting Ms Moore as an inattentive mother in a fragile marriage, who abused prescription drugs and once gave her nanny a two-hour "verbal beating". Ms Tannahill suffered a minor

Acne and diamonds dominate court battle, Giles Whittell writes

setback on Monday when a federal judge refused to hear her complaint about alleged unpaid overtime. But her main lawsuit, filed in a state court, was not dismissed despite claims by Ms Moore's legal team that the nanny's lawyer should be disqualified because of an unspecified conflict of interest.

Behind the legal niceties an ugly row has been simmering for months in Hailey, Idaho, the mountain town where Willis and his family seek refuge from the Hollywood limelight. He and Ms Moore spend much of the year with their daughters, Rumer, nine, Scout, six, and Tallulah, four, in a \$2 million log cabin-style home on the edge of the town.

Ms Tannahill has claimed that her three-and-a-half years with one of the richest families in show business was a

torment of long hours and endless travel at short notice. Her lawsuit alleges Ms Moore used "intimidation, threats and force" against her, deprived her of a social life and once warned, "it's scary what I could do to you".

Should the case come to court, Ms Tannahill may find her own character under attack. Madison Myers, another nanny who worked for the Willises, said in an interview last month that Ms Tannahill came to the stars' household a shy, overweight and aimless young woman who blossomed in Ms Moore's employ, receiving expensive skin care and liposuction and joining the actress in her daily exercise workouts.

"She had a boyfriend every place we went — New York, LA, England, Florida," Ms Myers told *People* magazine. "Kim thought she was just another part of the family and a movie star herself."

Another Hailey resident told the magazine: "I think the girl should have a lot of duct tape put on her mouth. Demi was very, very, very kind to her."

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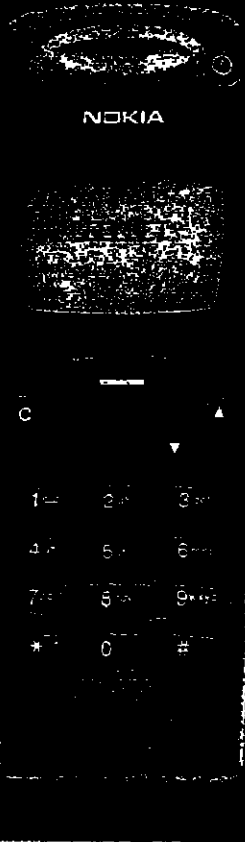
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Pope hires Russian mosaics master to build secret Jubilee chapel

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

THE Pope secretly commissioned a dazzling new chapel in the Apostolic Palace to mark the advent of the third millennium of Christianity, it was disclosed yesterday.

For two years a Russian mosaicist, Aleksandr Kormukhov, has been decorating the chapel, on the second floor of the medieval palace between the pontiff's private apartments and the Sistine Chapel.

Oggi magazine reported. It dubbed the church the "Paoline Chapel" in honour of the Pope, although there is already a chapel of that name in the Vatican.

Mr Kormukhov, 50, calls his creation the Redemptoris Mater chapel, inspired by the encyclical letter of that title issued by the Pope in 1987. Vatican insiders have been calling it the Jubilee Chapel, after the Holy Year that the Pope has called for 2000, Oggi said, and there are plans to inaugurate the chapel when the Jubilee begins at

the end of next year with the pontiff banging a silver hammer on the door of St Peter's.

The room, which is 49ft long, 36ft wide and 29ft high, will be decorated with millions of multicoloured marble, gold and silver mosaic tablets. The Pope chose the images of the Madonna, the Crucifixion, the Last Judgment and the celestial New Jerusalem decorating the chapel after consultation with Mr Kormukhov, Oggi said.

The magazine compared the

project to Pope Julius II's commissioning of Michelangelo to decorate the Sistine Chapel. The choice of a Russian Orthodox artist was in keeping with the Pope's efforts to reconcile the Russian Orthodox Church with Rome, a major ecumenical theme of his pontificate and of the encyclical.

"Who would not want to work for the Vatican, or even better the Holy Father," Oggi quoted Mr Kormukhov as saying. "Who would not want such a chance, at least once in his life? Who, in my

place, would not be happy? It is a grave and important task, a great responsibility."

Olga Sedakova, the Russian poetess and a friend of the Pope and the mosaicist, also played a part in the choice of the artist, he said. "She gave my name to John Paul II and brought my first drawings to Rome to be judged by the Holy Father. The idea of commissioning a chapel for the Jubilee was in the air for some time, but the decision to commission the work was taken in 1995.

The following year I was already at work," he was quoted as saying. Mr Kormukhov was later stricken with acute glaucoma affecting his eyesight, a complaint evidently worsened by the painstaking nature of the task in the Vatican.

The Russian artist said each image in the new chapel had its own symbolism. "The New Jerusalem, for example, is represented as a celestial city where the saints of the Eastern and Western churches are depicted," he said. "At the centre, high up, there is the Trinity.

Further down there is the Madonna with child at whose feet is depicted the rock of Moses; it is from here that springs the water, the symbol of the true faith."

□ **Papal loss:** The Pope was temporarily separated from his pontifical ring yesterday as he took the hands of a slightly over-enthusiastic congregation in St Peter's Square. As the ring fell to the ground, one of the Swiss Guards who defend the pontiff leapt into action to restore it to its owner. (AFP)

Cairo dissident urges Blair to put rights case

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

A LEADING Egyptian dissident in Britain has urged Tony Blair to tell President Mubarak he should learn the lessons of Northern Ireland.

Yassir Serrri, an Islamist militant sentenced to death in Egypt and now seeking asylum in Britain, said yesterday that he had written to Britain's Prime Minister to demand that he raise the question of human rights during his official visit to Egypt this weekend.

Mr Serrri said Mr Blair should tell the Egyptian leader to open a dialogue with his opponents, as Britain had done in Northern Ireland. "Let Mubarak learn the lessons. He has been 17 years in power. It is a very bad time for Egypt."

Egypt is certain to raise the issue of Islamist exiles, whom it has blamed for inspiring the massacre by militants in Western tourists in Luxor in November. It has angrily accused Britain of sheltering terrorists while calling for an end to terrorism in the Middle East, and has several times sum-

moned the British Ambassador to demand their extradition.

Mr Serrri said yesterday that he was not worried that he would be sent back to Egypt. "Not at all. This is a country where the rule of law prevails. Every day the Egyptian papers are calling for me to be sent back. Britain will not respond favourably because nothing tangible about my case has been presented to the British courts."

He accused the Mubarak Government of violating human rights, muzzling the press and holding the country "in one big prison". He repeated his call, made after the Luxor massacre, for an end to terrorism against the authorities and foreign tourists, and urged Egypt's Government to negotiate with the underground Islamic movement.

Egypt has refused to do so, has denounced Gamaa al-Islamiya, the main radical group, as a threat to Egypt and Islam, and blamed the organisation for the massacre that killed 58 tourists and

devastated the Egyptian tourist industry.

The Labour Government has insisted it is keeping a watch on all Muslim radical activists in Britain, and has assured Cairo the intelligence services will co-operate fully with the Egyptian authorities in fighting terrorism in Europe and the Middle East. Two weeks ago the Government denied a visa to several Egyptian radicals who wanted to take part in a conference of Muslim activists.

Labour is also to revive legislation proposed by the last Tory Government that would, for the first time, make conspiracy to commit terrorism abroad an offence. It would criminalise active support for overseas terrorism, including collecting funds. But, unlike the last Government, Labour will not prosecute the incitement to terrorism, arguing that this would be a breach of Britain's tradition of free speech.

Egypt voiced again its anger over the presence of condemned Egyptians in Britain



Yassir Serrri in London in December after the Luxor massacre, when he called for an end to such terrorism

when Robin Cook was in Cairo last month. The Foreign Secretary told President Mubarak and Amr Moussa, his Foreign Minister, that Britain could not take any action against asylum-seekers that was not sanctioned by the courts.

Amnesty International releases a report today that accuses many governments in the Middle East and North Africa of denying thousands of

political prisoners a fair trial and torturing them.

"One of the most basic tenets of any sound justice system is the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty," it said. "Tragically, the opposite is all too often the case."

The London-based body singled out Saudi Arabia and Libya for holding hundreds of political prisoners without trial, accused judges in Tun-

isia of lacking impartiality, and said security forces in Algeria had arrested and tortured thousands kept in secret detention.

Mr Blair will visit Saudi Arabia after Egypt, where he is expected to raise the issue of the two British nurses held for the murder of an Australian nurse in Dhahran in 1996. Saudi sources suggested that Saudi Arabia, which made clear it wanted to continue

with Labour, the relations it had with the Conservatives, might assure Mr Blair a deal for their release could be arranged after a suitable interval.

The Prime Minister then visits Jordan before ending his three-day trip in Israel, where he will take part in the country's 50th anniversary celebrations.

Leading article, page 21

Careless artwork restorers 'should be sued'

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

AN INTERNATIONAL art watchdog, alarmed at the widespread damage inflicted on paintings by art restorers using synthetic solvents, has called for the enactment of laws enabling negligent workers to be sued for malpractice.

The appeal, made by ArtWatch International, a New York-based organisation with branches in Britain, was accompanied by a call to Western museums to impose an immediate moratorium on all cleaning and restoration of old masterpieces.

At a public meeting here on Tuesday, held at the Art Students League in Manhattan, Professor James Beck, president of ArtWatch, called for urgent legislation to bring art restoration in line with other professional spheres, such as medicine and the law.

Professor Beck said: "The ability to obtain a court decision on the basis of malpractice in the medical field has served to put practitioners on notice. I suggest that it would provide for a healthy control of an industry that has no controls and few guidelines, and would serve to put a brake on radical interventions."

Under existing law, ArtWatch argues, museum trustees are legally responsible for the protection and safeguarding of works in their institutions. Michael Daley, director of ArtWatch UK, believes these trustees can be sued for breach of trust over "injurious restoration". But "the process is complicated, and does not address directly the question of the perpetrators, who are the restorers."

However, unlike medical malpractice suits, where an injured party — easily identifiable — sues the doctor, it is not apparent who the "injured party" might be in the case of a negligent restoration.

Mr Daley said: "Obviously, it makes no legal sense to say that Holbein has been injured, or Titian. The legislation must allow members of the public to sue... Perhaps buying a ticket to enter a museum should give a member of the public that right."



AND ANWAR / AFP

Mr Katamesh is reunited with his wife and daughter at his village yesterday

Militant freed after six years

BY ROSS DUNN

ISRAELI yesterday released Ahmed Katamesh, a Palestinian who was the longest ever administrative detainee, having spent nearly six years in

jail without trial. Mr Katamesh, 46, was welcomed home by his wife, eight-year-old daughter and friends at El-Bireh, a village in the West Bank. He said he felt happy to be back in his house but also anger and frustration over the five years and eight months he had spent in prison.

Mr Katamesh had been arrested over his suspected activities as a leader for the militant Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in the West Bank, an organisation which was known for hijackings in the 1970s and remains firmly opposed to the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

A banner prepared by the

front was put up at his home, welcoming him as a "leader, teacher and comrade". He was one of five members of the group being freed after signing papers promising to renounce terrorism and violence.

There are more than 200 Arab administrative detainees being held in Israeli jails on suspicion of involvement in terrorist activities. Most are Palestinians from the West Bank.

A campaign for the release of the detainees has been run by civil rights groups in Israel and some Israeli MPs. They say that it have been held without charge for more than three years.

Diplomatic bags 'used by Mossad agents'

Geneva: Israeli agents caught red-handed during a spying operation on a block of flats in Switzerland in February used a protected "diplomatic bag" to smuggle in their equipment, Swiss authorities reported yesterday (Peter Capella writes).

Carla Del Ponte, the Swiss federal prosecutor, said the case seized by police who arrested a Mossad agent with bugging equipment bore official diplomatic seals. The agent was also carrying a letter from the Israeli Foreign Ministry stating that the case was destined for the embassy in Bern.

The agent confessed to Swiss investigators that he was given orders by the Israeli secret service in Tel Aviv, but he refused to give details of the motives. He faces trial on charges that include military espionage for a foreign state, illegal wiretapping and forgery. Mrs Del Ponte declined to reveal the identities of the agent or his target.

Six Israelis were involved in the operation, reportedly aimed at a Lebanese Hezbollah sympathiser who used a flat in a suburb of the Swiss capital.

Women 'forced stab victim to eat worms'

FROM DEBORAH COLCUTT IN FRANKFURT

TWO German women who were members of a commune selling magazine subscriptions door-to-door went on trial yesterday accused of torturing and murdering a male colleague for failing to reach his sales target.

A south German court was told how Petra Falb, nicknamed "Lady Kalashnikov" because of her passion for firearms, and her accomplice Deborah Ott, 21, acted out of bloodlust and greed. They are charged with forcing one victim to eat worms and dig his own grave before they stabbed him and are also accused of murdering Volkmar Graz, 47, a commune leader.

The women, who were arrested last autumn, belonged to what the authorities have identified as a growing number of communes that recruit vulnerable, often homeless, youngsters to sell glossy magazine subscriptions and treat them like slaves.

The court in Ellwangen was told that Frau Ott, once a star saleswoman in Graz's commune in Baden-Württemberg, had to flee after her sexual relationship with her boss broke down and he became violent towards her. She was taken in by Frau Falb, a sales-

woman who had suffered humiliating punishments to reach a senior position in a neighbouring commune.

During the trial Harald Stephan, the chief prosecutor, will make much of the relationship between the two women, described by the police as being closer than any mother and daughter. Both sat motionless yesterday as the judge read out the charges before the prosecution outlined the events of a hot summer morning last July.

It is alleged that the women, angered by the poor sales performance of their colleague, Thorsten Mumm, took him to a secluded spot in a forest in central Germany. Much of the following horrific half-hour was recorded in 12 photographs taken by Frau Falb from a nearby tree stump where she sat munching a chocolate bar.

In the photographs, which will be shown at the trial, Frau Ott, and occasionally Frau Falb, are said to be photographed forcing Mumm, 26, to eat worms they had bought at a fishing tackle shop and prodding him with a red-hot poker and burning his naked body with a cigarette lighter.

Next they led him with a

noose tied round his neck to a muddy knoll where he was made to dig a shallow grave as the women tormented him, the court was told.

Frau Ott is accused of carving crosses on his back with a knife and asking him "Do you believe you are going to die now?", before stabbing him in the heart and chest, hitting him over the head with a spade and slitting his throat.

The court was told yesterday that within two months the women struck again, shooting dead Frau Ott's former lover, Graz, in his flat before slashing his throat with a knife.

The trial continues.

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Algerian torture by fire attacked

FROM PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA

HUMAN rights groups yesterday criticised the international community for failing to take action over the violence in Algeria. Brandishing a blowtorch which he lit at a meeting organised by four major international human rights groups in Geneva, Pierre Sané, the head of Amnesty International, said: "This is an instrument of torture in Algeria; this is used to burn the flesh of those who are detained in police stations."

His comments came as America, Britain and other European countries failed to agree on a resolution to condemn abuse in Algeria at a meeting of the 53-nation United Nations Human Rights Commission. Nor was there progress on an international inquiry or a visit by UN rapporteurs.

Botha 'authorised murder of enemies'

FROM SAM KILEY IN GEORGE

NEW evidence emerged yesterday alleging that P.W. Botha, the former South African President, and his State Security Council authorised the murder of political opponents.

Mr Botha and the council were also said to have established a Third Force as part of a "national strategy against revolutionary onslaught" during the 1980s.

According to minutes from the security council, which Mr Botha chaired between 1978 and 1989, the former President, his senior ministers and security officials attended a session at which a list of intended human targets, described as "politically sensitive people", were drawn up.

The revelations came during testimony at the trial of Mr Botha, 62, on contempt of court charges over his refusal to appear at hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The disclosures are likely to damage the reputation of his successor,

F.W. de Klerk, a Nobel peace laureate, who has denied all knowledge of orders to kill by the council and the existence of a Third Force.

Paul van Zyl, executive secretary of the commission set up to investigate apartheid-era crimes and applications of amnesty, in giving testimony yesterday read extracts from

‘The police and armed forces should have the objective of eliminating the ANC leadership’

the documents implicating Mr Botha in giving orders through the security council to "neutralise" and "eliminate" the white regime's political opponents, "enemy leaders" and "sensitive persons".

The documents, which minute regular meetings of the council between April and November 1986, were believed to have been destroyed when

Nelson Mandela was elected President in 1994. But some of the papers escaped the shredder and found their way into the national archives.

The minutes also show that, as part of a strategy to counter the African National Congress, the police and armed forces should have the "objective of eliminating the ANC

leadership" and "neutralise the influence of the ANC leaders and sympathisers".

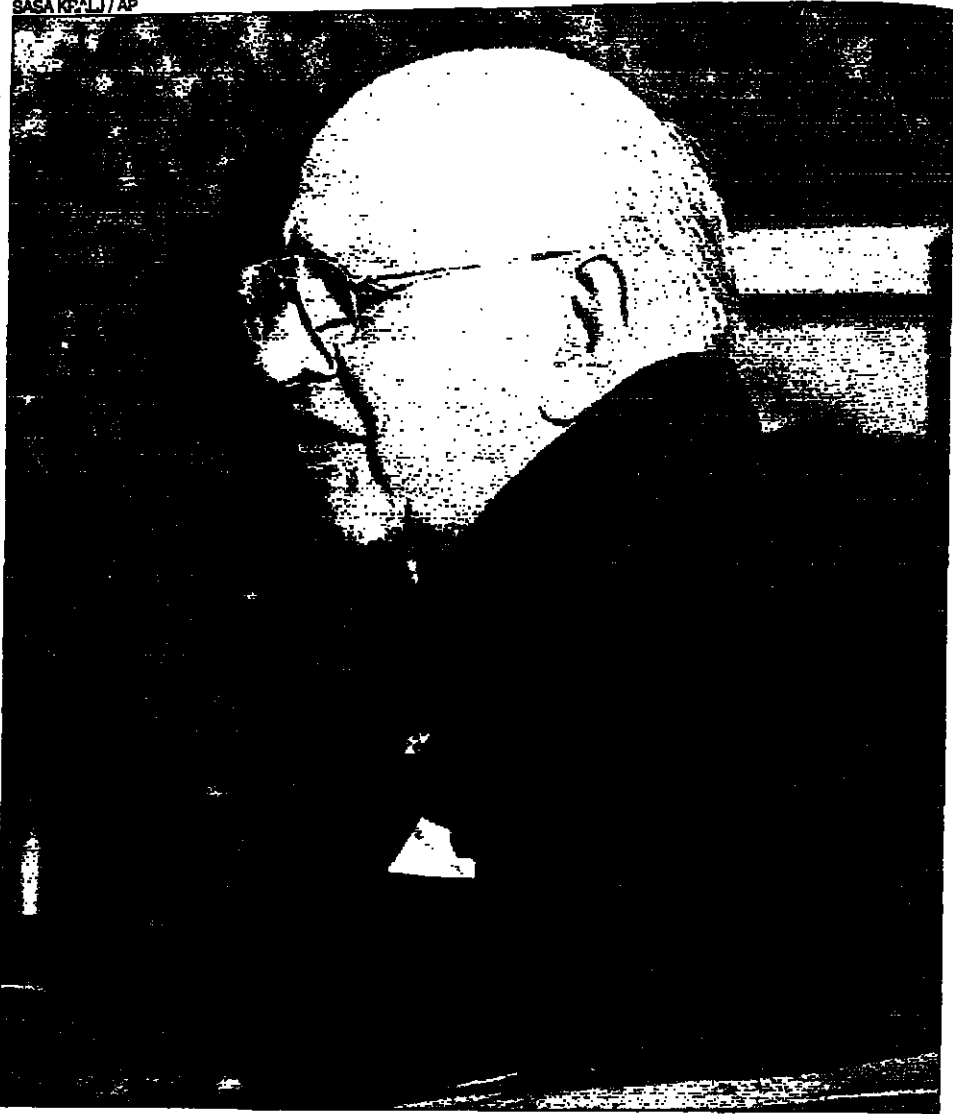
Mr van Zyl told magistrate Victor Lugaju, the only black official at the trial, that evidence from the former Commissioner of Police, Johan van der Merwe, and Adriaan Vlok, the former Law and Order Minister, who were present at security council meetings, in-

dicated that members of the armed forces interpreted "eliminate" and "neutralise" to mean kill.

Mr Botha has maintained his innocence of any wrongdoing during his terms as Prime Minister and President of South Africa. Yesterday he ignored the advice of his lawyers to testify before the commission at closed hearings in return for dropping the charges of contempt. "They can try to destroy me. They can't destroy my soul and my convictions," he said before yesterday's trial began.

His refusal to attend the commission has meant that allegations that would have been heard in camera got a public hearing yesterday.

□ Cape Town: The trial of disgraced anti-apartheid cleric Allan Boesak, on charges of fraud and theft of 1.1 million rands (£149,000) of foreign donor funds, has been postponed for a fourth time because of lack of funds for his defence, his lawyer said. (AFP)



P.W. Botha outside court yesterday at the start of his trial on contempt charges

WORLD IN BRIEF

Abuses in Nigeria condemned by UN

Geneva: A UN special report has catalogued the Nigerian military junta's systematic violation of basic human rights, accusing General Sani Abacha's Government of "regularly suppressing, harassing and detaining those who criticise its policies". The report, by Soli Jehangir Sorjee, listed abuse of judicial rights, including deaths in detention, death sentences on children and others in breach of international treaties, and unjustified and excessively long periods of detention.

Last night Tom Ikimi, Nigeria's Foreign Minister, dismissed the report. He said the European Union, and Britain in particular, wanted to destabilise his country by denouncing human rights abuses. (AFP)

Somalis kidnap aid workers

Mogadishu: Somali gunmen abducted nine foreign aid workers after they landed at the north Mogadishu airstrip, witnesses said. Seven of those kidnapped work for the Red Cross, including two pilots, and two for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The Red Cross said that those kidnapped were a German, a Belgian, a French woman nurse, two Swiss, a South African and a Kenyan pilot, an American and a Norwegian. (AFP)

Iran 'offers Rushdie hope'

Geneva: Maurice Copithorne, the United Nations special human rights investigator for Iran, said he had received informal suggestions of possible progress towards lifting an Iranian death threat against Salman Rushdie, the author, right. Mr Rushdie has lived largely in hiding since Ayatollah Khomeini, Iran's late spiritual leader, issued a fatwa in 1989 ordering his death for alleged insults to Islam in his book *The Satanic Verses*. (Reuters)



President sues over spy claim

Warsaw: A Warsaw court began hearing the case of President Kwasniewski of Poland, who sued Zycie, a popular newspaper, for publishing a report alleging that he met a Russian spy privately while on holiday before his election as President (Bogdan Turek writes). Mr Kwasniewski has demanded 2.5 million zlotys (£500,000), one of the highest sums sought for defamation in Poland, which the President will give to victims of Poland's 1997 flood if he wins.

Havel recovering well

The condition of Vaclav Havel, 61, was described as extraordinarily good after the Czech President awoke from sedation and was taken out of intensive care (Nigel Glass writes). He had a three-and-a-half-hour operation on Tuesday evening to repair a perforated intestine. On coming round he learnt that the Czech Republic's lower house of parliament had approved the country's membership of Nato. Speaking from Innsbruck University Hospital, he told Czech radio that he welcomed the decision.

Pol Pot 'agrees to trial'

Hong Kong: Pol Pot, the former Khmer Rouge leader held responsible for the deaths of a million Cambodians in the 1970s, has agreed to be tried by an international court, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported. It quoted Non Nou, a Khmer Rouge general, as saying Pol Pot would accept the movement's decision to hand him over to an international tribunal. (Reuters)

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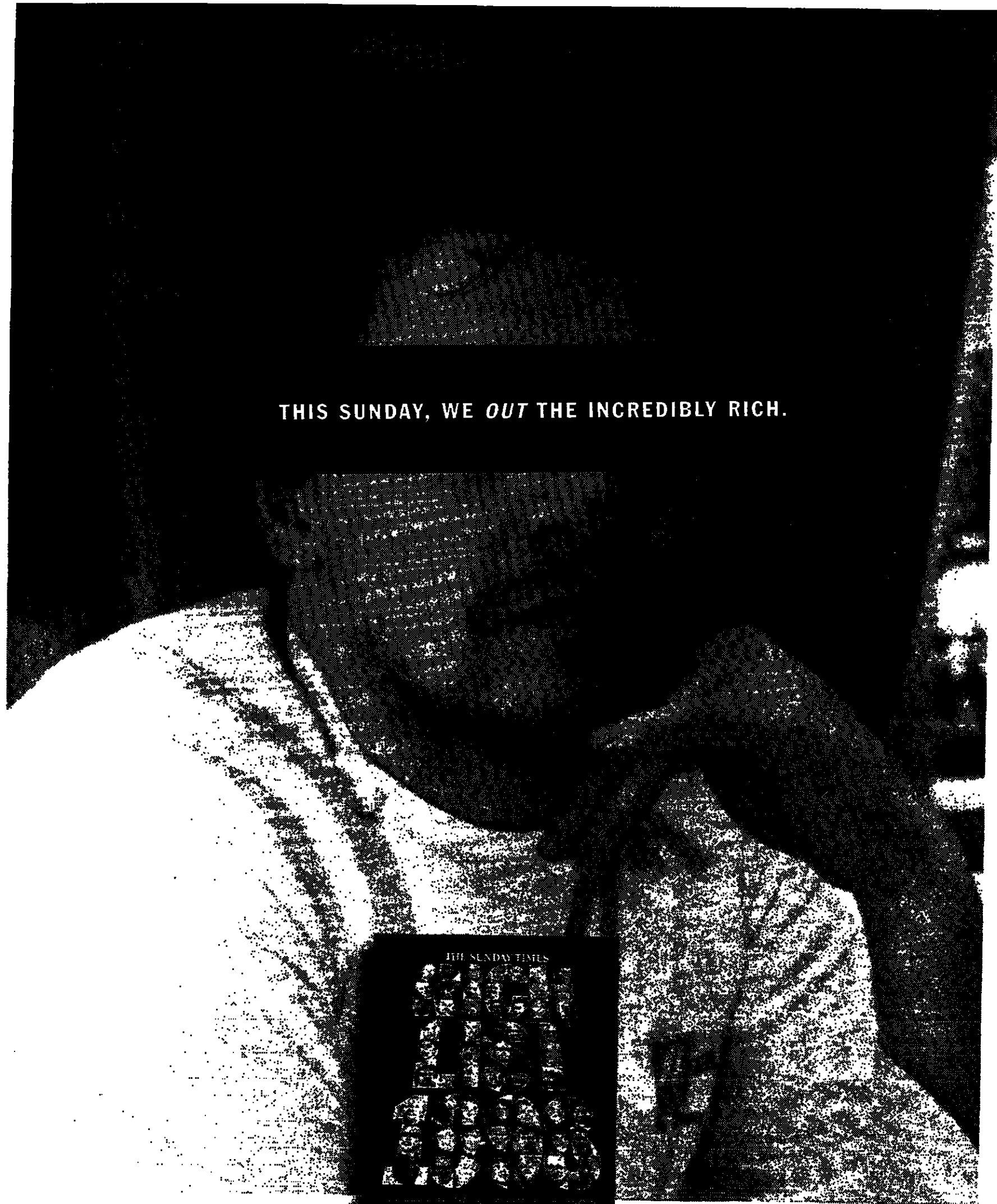
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Victory for Iran reformers as mayor is freed

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

THE popular Mayor of Tehran, whose detention on charges of embezzlement caused widespread public anger, was freed on bail yesterday, a day after thousands of students demanding his release clashed with hardline activists.

The release of Gholamhossein Karbaschi was seen as an important victory for Muhammad Khatami, the reformist President, and his moderate camp. They had insisted that his arrest nearly two weeks ago was politically motivated. The backlash should serve as a warning to the judiciary not to harass reformers close to the President or the conservatives would suffer further setbacks, analysts said.

But they added that political tensions would rise again if, as appeared likely, the judiciary attempted to try Mr Karbaschi. The judiciary claims it has compelling evidence of the mayor's guilt and has successfully prosecuted several of his aides during a long-running investigation into corruption at the municipality.

But the moderates are expected to launch a counter-offensive by bringing evidence to the courts of far more serious charges of corruption by institutions controlled by hardliners. "Mr Khatami has won the battle, but not the war," one diplomat said.

The mayor, regarded as a brilliant technocrat, had played a critical role in Mr Khatami's unexpected landslide victory over hardline candidates in last year's presidential elections. Mr Karbaschi's supporters insisted that his detention on April 4 was an act of revenge by the judiciary which, like several other key institutions, remains in the control of conservatives.

But Mr Khatami, who is committed to the rule of law, has avoided factional confrontation. The moderates fear that their opponents, determined to crush his reform programme, attempted to set a trap by detaining the mayor. If the President had sanctioned huge street protests in support of the mayor, it would have given the hardliners, who

control the police, the opportunity to crack down.

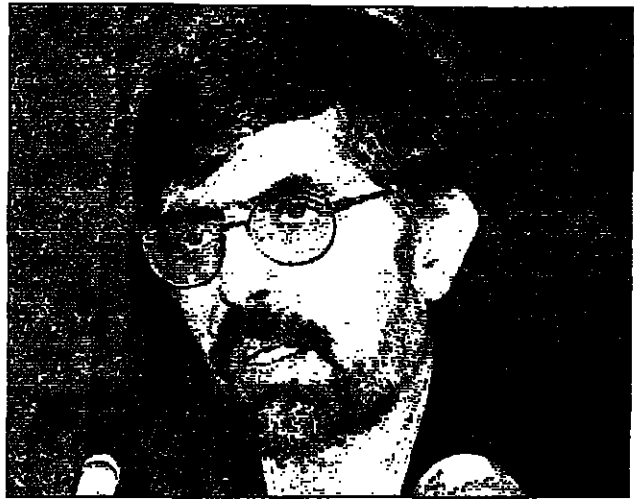
But the hardliners appear also to have been shocked by the popular backlash and may have feared that, in a decisive showdown, other security forces, like the Revolutionary Guards, would have ignored orders to crush the protests. Last year the Revolutionary Guards defied their commanders and voted overwhelmingly for Mr Khatami.

Mr Khatami worked hard behind the scenes to secure the mayor's release, but the decisive role was reportedly played by the discreet intervention of his predecessor, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who heads a state body which advises the unelected but supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

He was said to have persuaded Ayatollah Khamenei to agree to the mayor's release. It was Hojatoleslam Rafsanjani who appointed Mr Karbaschi after he was elected President in 1989. The mayor's popularity after nine years in the job stems from his achievement in transforming the teeming, polluted capital into a more pleasant place to live for its ten million people.

Ayatollah Khamenei is meant to be above factional rivalries, but is regarded as the hardliners' spiritual mentor. Apparently dismayed that the affair had backfired against the hardline camp, he made a dramatic intervention last week, summoning the rival players and ordering them to resolve the issue.

In a sign that the affair was spiralling out of control, students on Tuesday demonstrated outside Tehran University to demand the mayor's release. They were charged by riot police after clashes with hardline activists.



Karbaschi: release is blow to Tehran hardliners



Tom Mitchell protects his terrified daughters Nakita and Hayley at the Sydney picket

Sydney dockers attacked over 'picket' children

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

JOHN HOWARD, the Australian Prime Minister, condemned yesterday the use of children as "human shields" after an almost week-long dockers' dispute turned ugly.

His intervention came after television and newspaper coverage of the picket outside Sydney's Port Botany plant showed strikers placing their sons and daughters in the front line as police tried to arrest protesters. "The picket line is no place for children," Mr Howard told reporters. "I think the people responsible for the use of those children will be condemned by Australians, irrespective of their views on this dispute."

The distressing television footage of screaming young children clutching their fathers as policemen tried to arrest members of the maritime union, has shocked Australians and raised questions about the morality of the current protest. But Tom Mitchell, the father of the two terrified little girls seen crying on news bulletins while police began dragging workers away from the picket line, said his daughters, Nakita, seven, and Haley, nine, took it well at first, but became panicky and distressed when police moved in. "Suddenly they were drag-

ging people off to the paddy wagons. I just rushed the girls out the back," he said.

In Melbourne's Federal Court, the Maritime Union of Australia continued its attempt to overturn the sacking last week of 1,400 dockers by Patrick Stevedores.

John Coombs, the union's federal secretary, was joined in the packed court by union officials, academics, lawyers and media. Last week the court ruled that the company should put the mass sackings on hold for at least a week.

Jennie George, the president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, said before attending the hearing that the case was about the rights of ordinary people. The union movement, she said, was confident that the court would uphold these rights.

Ms George went on to appeal to both the Prime Minister and Peter Reith, the Workplace Relations Minister, to help to resolve the dispute and not divide the country.

The dockers claim that Patrick conspired with several other parties, including Mr Reith and the National Farmers Federation, to hurt the maritime union and its members by unlawful means.

Chinese dissident's husband pleads for her release

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

THE husband of Gao Yu, the jailed dissident, whose harsh prison conditions prompted a protest in Paris last week to China's new Prime Minister, Zhu Rongji, yesterday called for her to be freed because of ill health.

Zhao Yuanfang, manager of a small

state company, said that his 54-year-old wife's heart condition was worsening and that she was in a crowded prison cell with 11 women, four of whom are murderers. He hoped that, with President Clinton due to visit China in June, Beijing would agree to release Gao, recipient of the first world press freedom prize from Unesco last year, on medical parole so that she

could receive effective treatment. Gao is regarded as China's leading female exponent of human rights. She is serving six years for allegedly divulging state secrets in a Hong Kong journal. "I'm worried because her heart condition is getting worse and she is not receiving adequate medical treatment in prison," Mr Zhao said. He said he was allowed to see his wife,

jailed in October 1993, for half an hour each month.

□ **Fraud charge:** Police have charged a dissident in Sichuan province, who passed information abroad on workers' protests, with fraud, the Information Centre on Human Rights and Democratic Movement in China said yesterday. It said the charges against Li Bifeng, 34, were trumped up. (AFP)

Gold-chain vulgarity kills off Puppy love

Delhi traders can barely keep up with this year's demand for expensive air conditioners, proof of a boom in the number of Puppies — Prosperous Urban Punjabis. They define, some would say malign, the culture of much of northern India with an attitude to money that forgives anything, and especially corruption.

Sardarjis, or Sikhs, who make up the majority of the Puppies were, until a generation or so ago, the most respected because of their high ethical standards and decent attitude towards women. Perhaps the decade-long separatist Khalistan movement in Punjab changed many, but Puppies — the most visible of young Punjabis — are held in ridicule.

Brand-name watches, sunglasses and other trinkets are targeted mostly at Puppies, who strut about Delhi with Black Label Scotch on their breath and gold chains on their chests. Puppies own houses of exquisite taste, especially indoors, where they are filled with plastic chandeliers.

Puppies smoke imported cigarettes and no longer wear the once ubiquitous safari suit with open sandals (except in sweaty Bombay, its last big stronghold) in favour of Western-style jackets with padded shoulders to accentuate physi-

Black Label and colour TV mark Punjabi culture, Christopher Thomas writes

cal stature. Many do not need to do that: the fat Puppy is so commonplace he is the butt of what are essentially racist jokes. Other jokes are less mean, to wit: what is the ideal Puppy marriage? Marrying the latest television set and taking the bride as dowry.

The ferocious drinking habits of Punjabis — essentially Sikhs — are the stuff of legend. Black Label is a badge of belonging to the rich, even though much of it is adulterated by bootleggers who have ingenious schemes for filling used bottles.

Many women use the word Punjabi as a generic term for lascivious men. Puppies do nothing to improve their image. Puppy businessmen are to be found every day on the Shatabdi Express between Punjab and Delhi poring over pictures in *Stardust* magazine, which reports on Bollywood stars in various states of undress. Puppies

often boast a swollen belly — known as a rice belly. There is nothing so unobscure as Punjabi food, which comes hot and heavy and sits like lead for 24 hours.

Some Puppies are Marwaris, the Hindu caste that owns much of the country, from village shops to multinationals. They tend to be more sophisticated because their money is old and decently earned. They are thus not full-blooded Puppies: that mantle properly belongs to the nouveaux riches who have climbed through the ranks since economic reforms were introduced seven years ago.

Delhi cocktail chatter is known to have been halted momentarily by the squeal of a young wife who called across the room to "DJ" — an abbreviation for Darlingji ("j" being the Hindi diminutive for respect). This is classic Puppy social crassness. Puppies are frequently involved in real estate in Delhi, which has enriched many of them — although prices have lately crashed because so many foreign companies have decided there is no money to be made and are quitting.

Puppy landlords — like most Delhi landlords — want the bulk of their rent in cash. They come for their money in cars with windows so dark they are all but opaque, rather in the manner of Puppy business transactions.

Tornadoes deployed in Kuwait

London: Four RAF Tornado bombers arrived in Kuwait yesterday to supplement the eight stationed at Al-Jalib Airbase, about 40 miles from the Iraqi border, as part of Britain's continuing military presence in the region (Michael Evans writes).

The Tornado GR1s, from RAF Bruggen in Germany, replace air power on the aircraft carrier *HMS Illustrious*, which is being withdrawn from the Gulf.

The Tornadoes have been sent to demonstrate British determination to be ready for military action should President Saddam Hussein renege on the arms inspection agreement he signed with Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General.

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Dr Thomas Stuttaford reports on how moods can predispose us to cancer; Hodgkin's disease; Lupus Awareness Week; vitamin D deficiency; and gallstones

A fighting spirit can help to cure

The Bristol Cancer Centre has the support of its patron, the Prince of Wales, in its effort to raise £5 million over three years to further its work in helping people to confront the illness, and to cooperate with their doctors and other therapists in its treatment. In the past few weeks it has been promised £500,000 towards the appeal, officially launched this week.

The centre's philosophy has been an encouraging example of a successful interface between complementary and conventional medicine. Founded 18 years ago, it also enjoys the support of such notables as Linda and Paul McCartney, Sheila Hancock and Kate Adie. Until a year or two ago, lunch after any visit to the centre, however instructive, left a certain amount to be desired by those who were not used to a diet of carrots and lettuce. The centre now employs a first-class chef, Jane Sen, who has cooked for such people as the pop stars Peter Gabriel and Morrissey but now prepares vegetarian food so appetising that it has universal appeal. The guests at the centre's formal lunches have changed and recently have represented a cross section of medical opinion. Academic and clinical professors whose opinions are respected in the Athenaeum or the Royal Colleges happily mingle with colleagues whose views five years ago would have been considered extreme.

The role of the psyche in both developing and surviving malignant disease is becoming generally accepted. Dr Leslie Walker and Dr Oleg Eremin, of the Behavioural Oncology

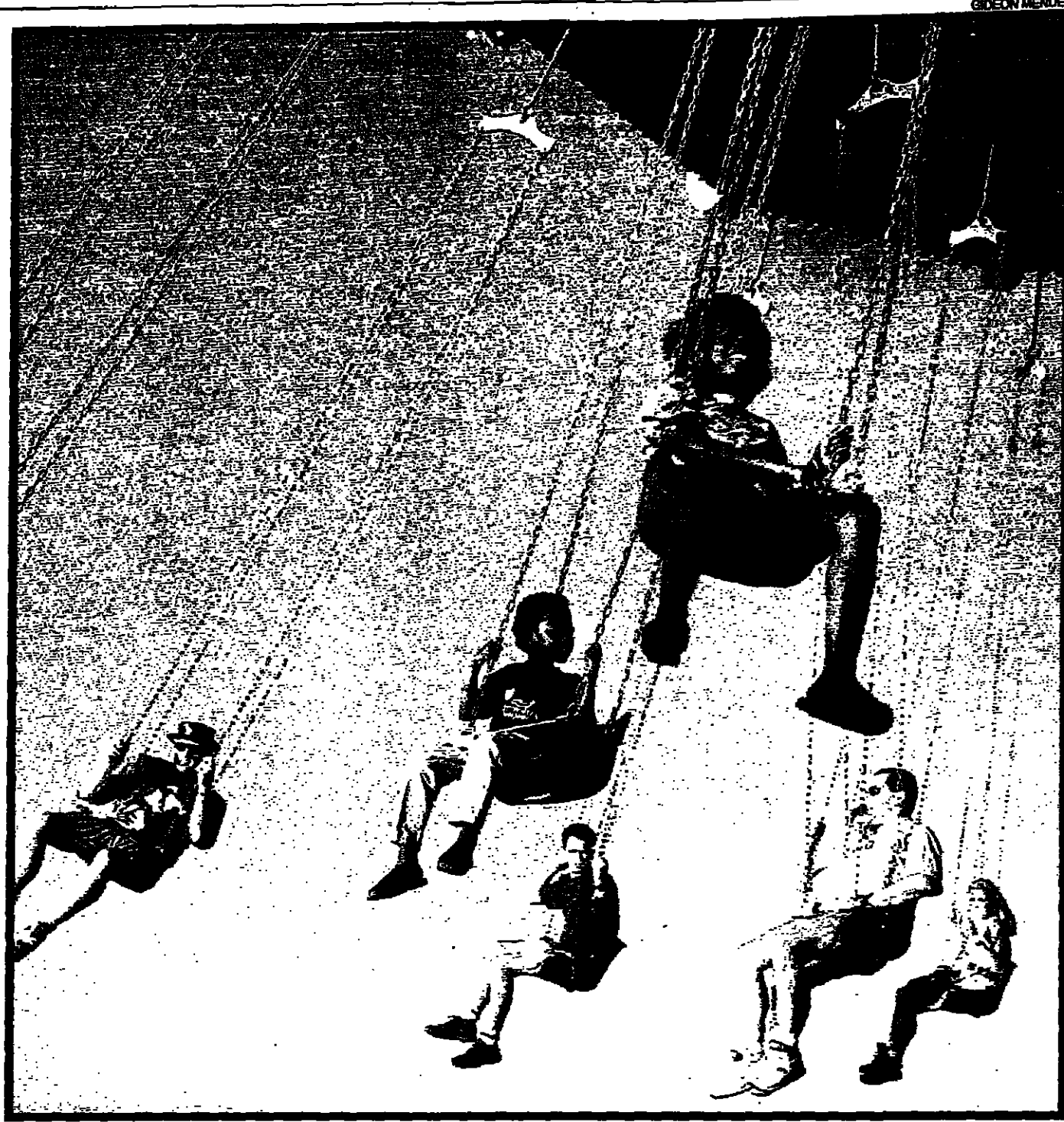
Unit at Aberdeen University, have reviewed the research on the effect of a patient's approach to cancer and published the result in *Seminars on Surgical Oncology* in 1996. In particular Dr Walker and Dr Eremin have studied the impact of a diagnosis of cancer of the breast.

The classic study published in the *BMJ* on psychiatric problems after mastectomy showed that 25 per cent of women were clinically depressed and a third had severe sexual difficulties. Other research had shown that a high percentage were extremely conscious of their changed appearance. Unfortunately, removing the tumour but conserving much of the rest of the breast doesn't always solve the problems. After the first year, women who have had a lumpectomy tend to worry excessively in case they have reduced their chances of survival in their bid to achieve a better cosmetic effect.

The psychological demeanour of patients with malignant disease has been understood since the days of the Greek physician Galen, who noted that individuals with a melancholic temperament were more likely to develop cancer than those who were sanguine. Sir James Paget, the former Norfolk GP who became surgeon to Queen Victoria, noted that patients were more likely to develop a cancer, and if they developed one were less likely to do well, if they suffered from "deep anxiety, deferred hope and disappointment — and that mental depression favoured the development of a cancerous condition". I heard the late Sir Heneage Ogilvie, the famous Guy's



Sheila Hancock



Get out and about: too much time spent indoors and a fast-food culture can add up to a serious vitamin D deficiency

A good dose of sunshine keeps bones healthy

FOREIGNERS are usually rather rude about the British climate and diet. They would not be surprised to learn that we suffered from a widespread shortage of the sunshine vitamin D, which is also found in fish, liver, eggs and margarine. The Americans are no less critical of our climate so it will come as a surprise to them that they too suffer from widespread vitamin D deficiency.

A recent study published in the *New York Journal of Medicine* and in the *British Medical Journal* shows that of 290 patients of various ages who were admitted to hospital in the US, 164 had low levels of vitamin D, and 65 were described as being "severely deficient". The authors attributed the lack of vitamins to spending too much time indoors and a fast food culture.

Osteoporosis is a common cause of fractures in the older age group. The public is well aware that a reasonable calcium intake can help to prevent it but are less aware that without adequate vitamin D as well they can drink the dairy dry without any advantage.

In adults too little vitamin D not only increases the risk of fractures, but can produce softened bones so that the strongest legs may become bowed. In children it can cause rickets. Unlike some vitamins, too much vitamin D is toxic and the instructions on the packet should be read carefully.

surgeon, say when lecturing at Oxford that he was able to make a reasonable assessment of the likelihood of someone developing malignant disease by observing their personality.

In order not to make patients feel inadequate, too much emphasis on the relationship between the psyche and survival time is undesirable. Other factors, the length of time the tumour has been present, the site of the tumour and its microscopic structure are all usually of greater importance. Psychological support does, however, as Bristol has demonstrated, play a significant role in recovery. Research published in *The Lancet* in 1989 demonstrated that it could double survival time in advanced cancer of the breast, and a similar random trial has

shown beneficial results from psychological intervention in cases of malignant melanoma.

The Bristol Centre was pioneering in encouraging patients to play a full part in their integrated treatment, which ideally combines the best of the latest technology with a robust approach to the disease.

Research has shown that patients who develop a fighting spirit, or refuse to acknowledge their tumour, do better than those who either respond with stoicism or hopelessness.

Those who used to be slightly sceptical about the Bristol work now believe that its success is scientifically based and results from the boost given to the patient's immune system by the improved morale it engenders.

The mystery cancer

Although sometimes strained, my relationship with Counts Bank has on the whole been a reasonable one. I was sorry, therefore, that in the week when many of the bank's staff agreed to follow the example of their chairman and walk to work, the weather was so wet and miserable that they must have been drenched before they reached their desks. The bankers were not, in any case, walking for their own health but to draw attention to lymphoma (lymphatic cancer). Sir Ewen Ferguson, the chairman of the bank, explained that they had supported research into these diseases ever since Tim Hilder, who worked there, died of Hodgkin's disease four years ago.

Hodgkin's disease is only one of the different sorts of lymphatic cancer. These are divided into Hodgkin's disease and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

The lymphatic system is a network of glands, the lymph nodes, and vessels that runs throughout the body and through which the lymph — a pale, straw-coloured fluid — circulates, carrying white blood cells and other components of the immune system. About 85 per cent of lymphoma are of the non-Hodgkin's type, the majority of which start within the B-lymphocytes, which form the antibodies in the body. Once the cells have become involved in the cancerous process, their ability to fight infection is reduced and patients may fall prey to a wide variety of conditions.

Even as the bankers were walking through the rain, Jane Ashbourne must have been writing her piece for *The Sunday Times* about the experience of waking up in hospital and finding that her surgeon was accompanied by a cancer specialist to explain how the gland they had just removed for testing showed evidence of a non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

The number of cases of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma is increasing at a rate of up to 10 per

cent a year in the Western world. Most of the patients are aged between 20 and 30, but since nobody knows the cause of the cancer, the reason for this increased incidence is unknown. The usual suspects have been indicted: it has been suggested that the cause may be increased background radiation, the green movement has its doubts about pesticides, others suspect that the disease is related to glandular fever or excessive sunlight. The only certainty is that it is a common malignant disease in HIV-positive people. There are also a few cases in which a genetic cause can be demonstrated.

There are different types of B-cell lymphoma. Some are indolent, slowly progressive and consistent with a long survival period, others are classified as aggressive and in these cases the course of the disease is faster.

The patient is likely to notice an abnormally large but usually painless lymph gland or glands, or they may go to their doctor because of unexplained weight loss, anaemia or tiredness. The symptoms may be associated with a mysterious temperature. As in the case of Ms Ashbourne, a lymph gland is removed for microscopic examination to make a diagnosis and the patient will have X-rays and scans to assess the extent of the disease.

Patients with Hodgkin's disease now do extremely well. The improvement in their outlook has been one of the great postwar successes of modern medicine. In cases where the disease is caught early, it can be eradicated in more than 95 per cent of patients. The outlook in cases of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma is less encouraging. Those with indolent disease can look forward to a long survival period, although they may need chemotherapy, radiotherapy or other treatment.

● The Lymphoma Association, PO Box 275, Haddenham, Aylesbury, Bucks HP17 8J. Helpline 01944 291500. Admin 01944 291479.

Cases are increasing at a rate of 10 per cent a year in the West

Cheery news about gallstones

IT IS comparatively well known that alcohol in modest amounts reduces the likelihood of gallstones.

There is an exception, however: if the alcohol is diluted with sweet mixers, gallstones may become more likely. The stones are thus the result of the orange or tonic, say, and not the vodka or gin.

Research published recently in the *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* looked at a study of gall bladder disease in nearly 3,000 women. The survey examined the effect of taking additional vitamin C on gall bladder complaints.

It was clearly demonstrated that vitamin C can reduce the incidence of gallstones in women — but not always. What was encouraging to those who believe in the beneficial effects of a couple of glasses of wine a day was that

this reduction was noted only in those women who drank regularly.

Recent work has cast some suspicions — albeit no more than that — on the advantages of daily doses of more than half a gram of vitamin C. This research has not been shown to have clinical significance, other than that those who

want to avoid gallstones can rest assured that half a gram of vitamin C a day will not do them even theoretical harm — and that if they combine it with a modest daily intake of red wine, or other drinks, then they will be less likely to suffer from the problems that are associated with gall bladder disease.



THE SUNDAY TIMES

KISSING HITLER

When Gottfried Wagner discovered pictures which proved his grandmother had an affair with Hitler, he was appalled. But Germany is outraged for different reasons... *The Sunday Times Magazine*, this weekend

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

The wolf within

MOST people would be hard pressed to define lupus, a disease that takes many forms. But during Lupus Awareness Week — April 11 to 18 — those who treat the condition, or who suffer from it, hope to explain just what it is.

One form is lupus erythematosus, which is divided into two categories: systemic (SLE) and discoid (DSE). Both are chronic, autoimmune, inflammatory diseases of the connective tissue, the tough material that gives strength to our blood vessels and skin, keeps the joints and ligaments together and supports many other parts of our body.

With SLE, many organs may be involved — the sufferer may develop heart problems and kidney disease, a common manifestation. The arteries, and the tissues that they supply, may also be affected. SLE is associated with feelings of general ill health, fever, anaemia, weight loss and joint pains. DLE, by contrast, is confined to the skin, and the patient does not usually feel unwell.

Lupus — from the Latin for wolf, said to be so-called because it rapidly eats away the affected part — is diagnosed through blood tests and biopsies of skin patches. In mild cases non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs may be adequate but usually, sooner or later, these need to be combined with steroids or chloroquine, an antimalarial drug.

The outlook for those suffering from the condition has improved greatly over the past 20 or 30 years.

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Gradgrind knew a fact or two...

Knowledge has to be the basis of education, says Chris Woodhead

Once I heard the question I knew that, if I wanted the job, I had better come up with the right answer.

The head teacher wanted to know whether I thought "the process" was more important than "the product". No explanation was given, and none was needed. This, after all, was the early 1970s. Postman and Weingartner had just published *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*. All young teachers knew that education was, or ought to be, about teaching the young to question, to criticise, to reject conventional wisdom. The fact that they knew nothing about the subject upon which they were pontificating was considered an irrelevance. It was their opinion that mattered. It was the critical engagement, "the process", that we, as teachers, must foster. We betide anyone in those halcyon progressive days who harked back to a Gradgrindian preoccupation with the teaching of "facts". Knowledge, "the product", was out.

It still is. Last week the Confederation of British Industry told the Government that time must be found in both primary and secondary schools to teach six new "key skills": communication, numeracy, team-work, problem-solving, using information technology, and improving learning and performance. Margaret Murray, the Head of the CBI Learning and Skills Group was reported as saying: "Even graduates can find that what they learn is out of date immediately. We need to ensure that they are self-reliant and flexible enough to meet the challenges of the future."

Read quickly, this is a perfectly reasonable statement. We all know, don't we, that we live in the middle of a knowledge revolution? We all want, don't we, to be self-reliant and flexible so that we can face our post-millennial futures? Of course. Dependence and rigidity have never been very attractive qualities.

It is worth reflecting for a moment on what Ms Murray is saying. It may or may not be true that at the frontiers of human knowledge new discoveries are transforming our understanding of the world we inhabit. Does it follow that the foundations of science as taught to secondary school pupils are in a state of flux? Might it not be that the more secure their grounding in these basics, the more competent they will be to deal with the radical changes they encounter if, as adults, they work in a scientific environment?

Most pupils will not use their scientific knowledge in their jobs after school. The justification for teaching science to all pupils has to be non-utilitarian. All educated people need to know something of scientific method and the patience and humility upon which scientific discoveries depend. Knowing a little about the nature of science may help them to come to informed, personal judgments in later life on the scientific controversies of the day.

Science, of course, is the discipline which seems to fit Ms Murray's thesis most neatly. Does the nature of literary or historical understanding really change that radically from generation to generation, let alone from day to day? The fundamentals of Latin grammar remain the same now as they were in 1957 when I sweated my way through my Kennedy's *Latin Primer*.

No, basic knowledge of the different subject disciplines still needs to be taught if we want the next generation to understand anything about anything. "Understanding" moreover, ought to be the goal. We cannot allow the sly utilitarianism of the CBI to triumph over the traditional concept of a liberal education that needs no justification beyond the satisfaction and enjoyment that it brings.

Neither must we be seduced by the implied argument that if schools focused more on the development of the key skills upon which the employability of the individual and the prosperity of the nation depends, and less upon the teaching of arcane subjects like history and English literature, this country would be a better place.

Nothing is achieved without patience and discipline

There is a pedagogic nonsense at the heart of this thesis. It is that skills such as "problem-solving" or "improving learning and performance" (whatever this might mean) can be taught in a knowledge vacuum.

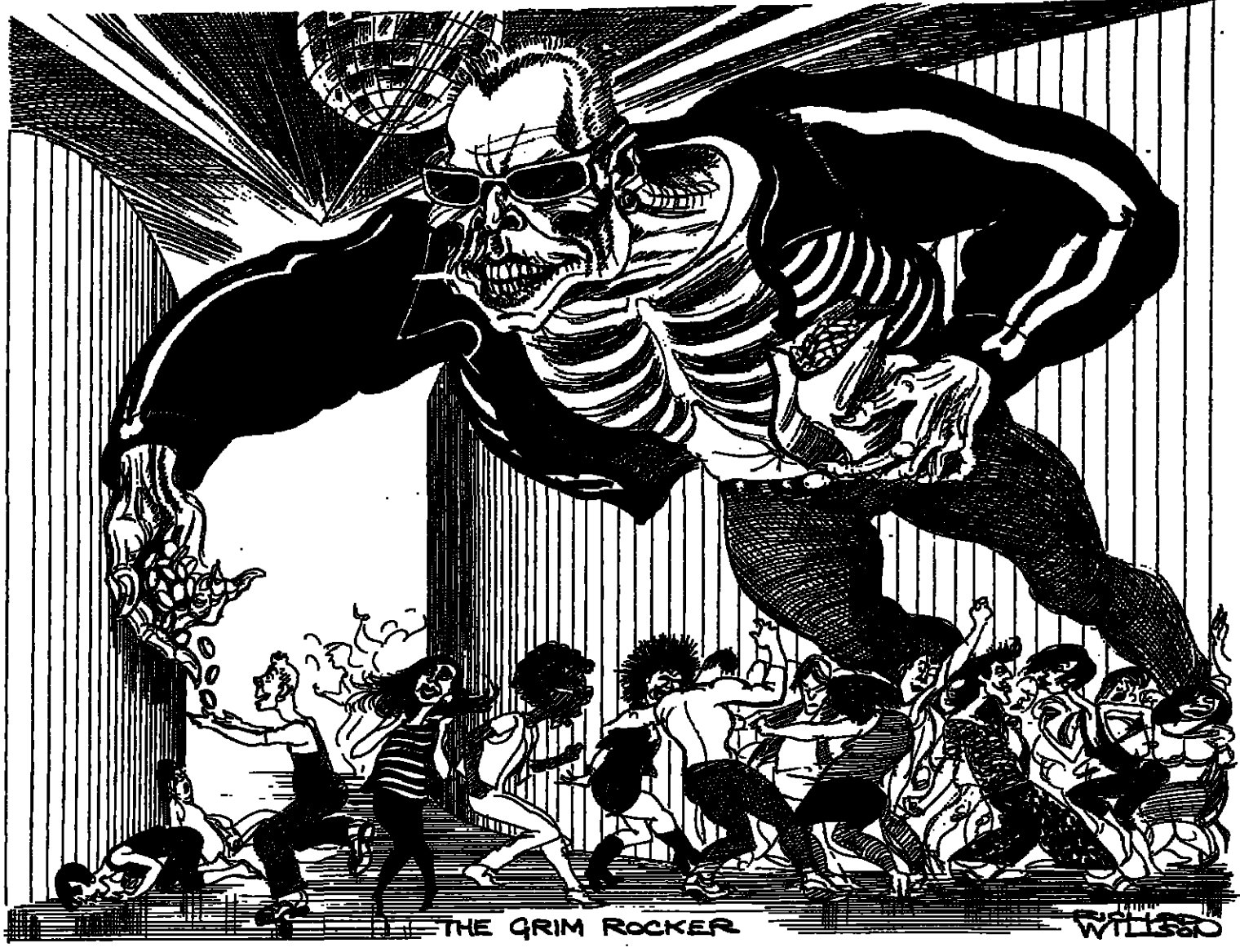
Problems are not "context-free" and good teachers have always ensured that their students have had, irrespective of the subject, to think their way through difficult issues.

Was Lear a "man more sinned against than sinning"? What were the causes of the English Civil War? Ought the pursuit of retribution to have any place in a modern theory of punishment? What are the solutions if not problems? Will not the struggle to find "solutions" to them develop intellectual security and flexibility?

Of course it will. I shudder, in fact, to contemplate the banality of the "problem-solving" and "team-building" exercises which might reduce the exploration of such issues in some future curriculum.

I dread, too, the prospect of a world which has forgotten that "self-reliance" and "flexibility" are not the only or perhaps even the key virtues. It is not only science that teaches patience and humility. To submit oneself to the discipline of learning a foreign language is to learn very quickly something very important about what Iris Murdoch called "the soft, fat ego". The world is not something nebulous out there, floating free, waiting for our latest opinion. It is something hard and real and an education which does not teach the young that nothing is achieved without patience and self-discipline is an education that is not worth having.

The author is Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools.



A fresh line on drugs

Narcotics policies are failing the young; what we need now is a royal commission to end our perilous ignorance

The Government should appoint a royal commission to examine the nature of Britain's drug problem and make recommendations. The "war" against drugs may or may not be being lost; there is disagreement even about that, but this is certainly one of the classic cases for a commission. A great social evil is destroying the lives of many young people; there is no consensus on the factual basis of the spread of this contagion, or on the medical dangers of particular drugs; there is certainly no consensus on the best way to deal with the problem. Without an authoritative examination of the evidence, policy recommendations can only be speculative opinions.

The news from the front is bad. On Tuesday Customs and Excise announced that heroin seizures in 1997 had increased by 135 per cent against the previous year; there has been a steady rise in heroin seizures both by Customs and police for most of the 1990s. This is the best guide we have to the level of importation and abuse. It cannot be a precise one, but it seems certain that heroin use has been rising rapidly. There are stories of heroin dealers targeting the young with free samples and so on; the evidence for this is less certain, but it seems only too likely to be true.

There has also been a large increase in seizures of cocaine and synthetic drugs; the cocaine seizures are up by about 80 per cent. The recently appointed "drugs czar" Keith Hellawell says that "the overall use of illicit drugs has plateaued"; this more optimistic view seems to be true only of cannabis, where the seizures, though huge, were only slightly up on the previous year. Paul Flynn, the Labour MP who is the vice-chairman of the Drugs Misuse Group in the Commons, says that the seizure figures show the "abject failure" of the present policies on drugs, and points to the tripling of deaths from heroin over the past three years.

One of the benefits of a royal commission should be that such an inquiry would distinguish properly between the different drugs. The attraction of these illegal drugs as well, is that many legal drugs as well, is that they give people a high. The drawback is that they present health risks or reduce social competence. No two drugs have the same effect on the mood, and no two drugs present an identical risk to health. For instance, nicotine is an admirable drug in

terms of mood alteration — it gives a mild lift — and of social competence. Cigarette smokers can actually concentrate better on their work. Unfortunately it is highly addictive and has lethal long-term effects on health.

One lobby, which has been led by *The Independent*, wants to take cannabis out of the illegal group and put it with caffeine, alcohol and nicotine. It is not possible to know whether this lobby is justified without better information about the long-term effects on health of using cannabis. Some doctors believe that substantial long-term use damages the brain, but this is exactly the sort of issue a royal commission could examine in detail.

There are claims made for the drug policies of The Netherlands where the decriminalisation of cannabis is said to have reduced the use of hard drugs. Undoubtedly one of the dangers of including relatively mild drugs in the illegal group is that users of these drugs are introduced to suppliers who are criminals. If, by decriminalising cannabis, one could separate the large number of cannabis users from the much more dangerous hard drugs culture, that would plainly be a gain. Whatever its medical effects, there are hundreds of thousands of people who have used cannabis, if only in their student days, and now hold down responsible jobs. A royal commission could examine the experience of The Netherlands in an impartial way.

Other drugs have different effects. Ecstasy can lead to sudden death; LSD can produce bizarre and sometimes dangerous hallucinations, and can be followed by recurrent incidents of a schizoid character; cocaine and heroin are both major and damaging drugs of addiction. Yet even in these cases, there is an argument for trying to take them back out of the hands of criminals, and treating addiction primarily as a medical problem.

The drugs business is enormously profitable, and it is profitable because it is illegal. If cocaine or heroin were ordinary refined agricultural products, sold in the open market, they would be extremely cheap, as cheap as any other processed plants. If they were cheap, no criminal fortunes could be made from selling them, and no one would have a motive to seduce children into addiction. Some people would still become addicts, simply because the product was inexpensive and available, like laudanum in the 19th century. We cannot tell whether this state of affairs would produce more or fewer addicts: it would, however, remove the criminal profit, and not drive people to crime to pay for their habit.

The average heroin addict is said to steal goods worth more than £40,000 every year. Some police officers, who deal with these drug-related crimes, believe that universal drug decriminalisation would both remove the profit of dealing and remove the pressure to commit crimes to pay for drugs. These arguments should be examined with an open mind.

Hard drugs are now available throughout the industrialised world; the only countries where they are not almost universally available seem to be those too poor to pay for them. In Boston it is easier for a college student to buy drugs than alcohol; the laws restricting drugs are flouted, those forbidding the sale of alcohol to people under 21 are successfully enforced.

A few weeks ago I was reading the local paper in Somerset; it reported a crack cocaine case in Midsomer Norton. If one can buy crack in Midsomer Norton, one can buy it almost anywhere in Britain.

One of the side-effects of the global drug business is that it produces a complex of corruption, ranging from the petty corruption of local policemen, through the corruption of banking by money-laundering, to the

William Rees-Mogg

wholesale corruption of ministers and governments in some countries. As with the experiment of prohibition of alcohol in the United States, the prohibition of drugs naturally leads to the creation of criminal empires. Sixty-five years after the United States repealed prohibition, these organised crime networks still exist and flourish. Once they have been brought into existence by huge criminal profits, they are extremely difficult to get rid of.

The main concern for the Government must be the protection of the young. The drugs culture is no respecter of social class; it is to be found in prosperous suburbs as well as in inner-city estates. But the opportunities for the drug culture to expand are greatest where there are few jobs and strong local gangs. Some estates in Manchester seem to be under the virtual control of these drug gangs. Strong policing and heavy sentences have been tried in the United States to break these gangs; as a result there are 400,000 Americans in prison on drugs offences. They have often been sentenced to very long terms. That is proportionately more people than are in prison for all offences in Britain. Tough law enforcement may be necessary, but is not an answer.

I need the United States is an example of how not to deal with drugs. The problem has to be tackled in social, medical and educational terms, as well as in terms of law enforcement. The Americans have put too much pressure on other nations to imitate their over-simple pattern of response.

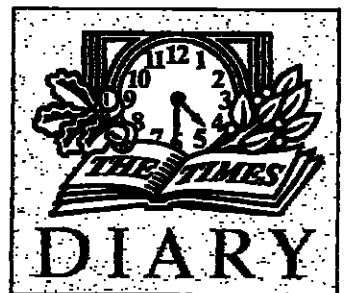
Many people fear that any inquiry would in some way weaken the drive against drugs. Yet Britain's policy is not working, and it is hard to see how a state of ignorance can help to make it work. The present policy is not protecting the young; it is not destroying the criminal network; it has not prevented drugs becoming universally available in Britain. In any social disaster on this scale, the natural course is to review the evidence, listen to the arguments, establish the options and suggest which might work best. That would be rational government. We cannot simply go on sending each generation of children over the top to take their chance of having their lives ruined and of being turned into criminals.

Royal targets

DAME Edna Everage, who delights audiences to her show by humiliating individuals in the stalls, picked on the Prince of Wales and his sons during a performance in London this week. The Australian entertainer, known as Barry Humphries out of frocks, raised the prickly issue of his homeland turning republican and then suggested that Princes William and Harry might consider appearing in drag. Dame Edna's jocularly at royal expense came during one of the first performances of her latest show, produced by Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare. After urging Australia to sack the Queen, the antipodean proposed herself as the country's first president. Dame Edna then complained that schools performed only worthy productions such as Shakespeare and recommended that, if there be any schoolboys in the audience, they should perform sketches similar to his outhouse show (Harry has just appeared in *Oliver* and William in *The Winter's Tale*).

Despite being the butt, the royal party appeared to enjoy the slap stick. The three Princes laughed riotously, even at the more pointed jibes. Harry enthusiastically joined in with waving gladioli at the end of the show, a Dame Edna tradition. Afterwards, the group, which included Lady Valerie Solti, widow of composer Sir Georg, went backstage to meet the cast. Harry clutching a handful of pulped gladioli.

A new leaf
HEZZA is to write about the second love of his life. The former Deputy PM declared that, after his business empire, his trees were his



gent's Park was disrupted — by snow. "Bottom is too cold to carry on," says a bedraggled director.

Rights of way

THE Duke of Buccleuch is in dispute with Janet Street-Porter. He has been blamed by the Ramblers' Association for supposedly deterring yompers. The group, whose most vocal supporter is Miss S-P, is cross with the 9th Duke, who was once declared "Access Champion" by the Country Landowners' Association. Ramblers say Buc-



"What's so new about Cool Britannia?"

cleuch has "illegally blocked a bridleway". The former Tory MP has strewn a path connecting the village of Little Oakley to Corby, Northamptonshire, with "barbed-wire fences, a watercourse and a cereal crop". Not fair, says the duke: "We are discussing this with the farmers involved. The estate is committed to keeping paths open."

● GLAM rocker Marc Bolan, buried in Golders Green after crashing his Mini, is being pursued by fans 20 years after his death. Christine Price, local grave shoveller, says: "We get a hard core who visit the grave and one or two crazies steal the plaque under his rosebush. We have to keep a couple of spares just in case."

Rodin's return

RODIN'S erotic masterpiece, *The Kiss*, is to return to Lewes, 95 years after it first arrived by horse and cart from the sculptor's Paris studio. Last time, it was not too popular. The Bostonian Edward Warren, who commissioned the sculpture, stipulated that male genitals be modelled in entirety, which went down badly with denizens of the Sussex town when Warren displayed the work in the town hall. Warren and his friend Edward, who ran a refuge for young men,



were attacked by a Miss Fowler-Tutt. She feared it might "inflame the passions" of soldiers. It was taken back ignominiously to Warren's stable block. The Tate, which bought it in 1933, is now lending it for six months for a millennium exhibition. But 95 years on, the town seems little more taken with Rodin. "The costs are enormous," says John Mezza, the organiser. "It's become a bit of a white elephant around our necks."

JASPER GERARD

Economies that are all at sea

Magnus Linklater on how islands can manage alone

The Army pulled out of St Kilda this month. To the sounds of a tape-recorded bugler, the last military detachment closed the base that has been used ever since the original islanders were forced to abandon their Atlantic home in 1930. This most remote outpost of our British Isles is now, officially, abandoned. All that remains as a memorial to the fortune of its inhabitants is the old street of tumbledown cottages, a ruined church, and the birds — fulmars, puffins and gannets — which once provided the people with their slender livelihood.

Abandoning a once-inhabited place is always a sad affair, a defeat for human endeavour and enterprise. Driving north, as I have just done, through the deserted glens of Caithness and Sutherland, is a melancholy reminder that these remote areas were once full of people. Popular mythology has it that the inhabitants were cleared out by rapacious landlords, more interested in sheep than crofters. The harsher truth is that their marginal economy was always against them. The biggest emigrations took place long after the 19th-century Clearances, when the lure of better jobs and a decent standard of living elsewhere proved irresistible.

The drift, alas, continues. Further south, the standard complaint is about housing expansion and the erosion of the countryside. But in the Hebrides and the far north they worry about too few, rather than too many, people. A recent conference on unemployment in the western islands heard some depressing statistics: a 40 per cent drop in the population of Harris since the 1951 census; the number of full-time jobs in the Highlands down by half in a decade; industries like weaving and fishing on the decline. Small may indeed be beautiful, but too small, it seems, means death.

And yet, as the conference organisers pointed out, some places, just as remote, are doing well. There is expansion in parts of Skye and Lochalsh; one or two speakers used the word "boom" when they talked of Orkney and Shetland. Analysing the success and failure of island economies is worth a clutch of PhDs, and these last few days, spent in Orkney, have reversed some easy preconceptions. For instance, the idea that the people most likely to emigrate are those without jobs seems not to be true. The ones who leave are usually those who have begun to make a success of their lives, and are looking to expand — the very people that islands most need. One or two communities, where there has been heavy investment in new industries, have actually seen their populations fall. Other places with more modest economic prospects have experienced a small but steady gain.

A case study in contrasts emerges from two neighbouring islands to the north of mainland Orkney: Westray and Papa Westray. Westray (average population around 700), is the bigger of the two, and has done well in exploiting its natural assets. Good farming land, a thriving fish processing business, and a developing interest in tourism has meant a distinct improvement in its standard of living. But its very success has meant that those responsible have found the island too small a base from which to operate. Larger fishing boats need bigger harbours, tourism can be better run from Orkney's capital, the mechanisation of farms means the number of employees has been reduced. Over the past few years, 90 people have left the island — its population has dropped to 610.

Papa Westray (population 60), has focused on what is known as the community co-operative, encouraging those with small businesses to form part of a close-knit and self-supporting group. Its strength derives from this combination of skills rather than the success of individual enterprises.

The key elements that hold people together are traditional — a good local school, a lively range of community activities, and a mix of smallscale jobs. One councillor said that he had changed his views entirely about the priorities for an island population: "I used to put employment at the top of the list," he said. "Now it's school, community, and only then jobs. People who are looking to move will tend to bring their jobs with them. What they want to know first of all is whether it is the kind of place they want to be part of."

One extra ingredient is still badly needed: managerial skill. To run an island co-operative well needs the kind of ability that any successful small business requires. Papa Westray suffered a recent setback when one family left to return to the mainland; that threatened to destabilise the entire island. What Orkney's council has begun to recognise is that investing in people is every bit as important as attracting new investment or subsidising jobs. "We'd rather have someone with management skills than yet another dehorned carver," was one dry comment I heard.

It's a lesson that may be deeply familiar in the boardroom of Sainsbury's or Marks & Spencer. It would also be the best way of preventing the tragedy of another abandoned island.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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INTO THE MINEFIELD

Blair embarks on a difficult Middle East tour

After a week spent immersed in Ulster, the Prime Minister might think that he deserved a respite from diplomatic dilemmas. Tony Blair's short but intense tour of the Middle East over the coming few days is not of the same order but threatens to be no less delicate than the time he spent in Stormont. In a sense, he has an even more awkward task. The Northern Ireland issue is at least structured around one clear if stark division. Over the next few days Mr Blair must dance around three separate but interconnected issues: the different perspectives of Western and Arab states on questions of democracy and freedom; the internal friction within Arab nations between secular and theological factions and the continued Arab-Israeli dispute over the course of the peace process. For understandable reasons, this last element — the Arab-Israeli conflict — has captured the headlines. This would not necessarily have been the case had Robin Cook's recent tour of the region not taken on the explosive quality that it did. The Foreign Secretary has hardly left the best of atmospheres behind him. The Prime Minister will not want to court the same controversy in Israel and for all the bargaining that has surrounded his schedule — this element may prove a surprisingly amicable exercise. His time spent in Jordan, a country with which Britain has long enjoyed close links, will be easy. In both Saudi Arabia and Egypt, however, he will encounter testing territory. All of Mr Blair's tact may be needed.

For a year now relations between Britain and Saudi Arabia, usually amicable but always vulnerable to sudden disruption, have been put in a state of limbo by the arrest and imprisonment of the two nurses, Lucille McLauchlan and Deborah Parry, on murder charges. This affair has not been handled well on either side. The Saudis failed to anticipate the adverse reaction that

would be ignited in Britain. Many in this country have responded to the controversy with unhelpful and inaccurate attacks on the Saudi judicial system and the Islamic principles that stand behind it. Now that tempers have cooled somewhat, both Governments want a solution that will preserve honour all round. Mr Blair has a real opportunity to move that process forward.

Matters in Egypt will be more contentious. In recent years, London has become the centre of intrigue for the Arab world. Numerous organisations that seek the overthrow of long-established authorities throughout the area — including at least 15 groups who in effect endorse terrorism — are now based here. These are not, on the whole, attractive people nor are their democratic credentials credible. Their presence and political activity has especially infuriated the Egyptians who, as the Luxor massacre last year so tragically demonstrated, are engaged in a bitter struggle with such fanatics. Six months ago President Mubarak publicly accused Britain of being a haven for Islamic terrorism. He will be even more blunt with Mr Blair in private.

This is an exceptionally testing matter. Arab nations can legitimately point to our own anger at countries that have harboured IRA suspects. But Jack Straw has promised that British law will be changed so that conspiracy to commit acts of terrorism abroad from our soil will become illegal. He will also stamp out fundraising in Britain for terrorist activities overseas. He has stoutly refused to issue a blanket ban on incitement to terrorism for fear that it will infringe our historic respect for free speech. The line between incitement and conspiracy is inevitably uncertain. The Government is still right to seek the distinction. This will not be a remotely popular message with President Mubarak. Mr Blair may find he encounters his fireworks in Cairo rather than Tel Aviv.

A PAY HOLIDAY

Bold moves to boost Vauxhall's British future

In the 1970s, pay scales, wage rates and incomes policies were the staple diet of political discourse. Now that wage determination has been almost completely privatised, it takes a lot for a pay story to earn a place on the first few pages of a newspaper. But the announcement that Nick Reilly, the chairman of Vauxhall, is promising to forgo his £160,000 salary for a year *pour encourager les autres*, has made the grade today.

Its curiosity value arises mainly from its context. At a time when directors' pay has been rising some four times faster than average earnings, when utility bosses are pilloried for their salary packages, when executives seem to be paid as much for failure as for success, there is some satisfaction in seeing a chairman try the power of example.

To trade unionists, this may look like a stunt. Mr Reilly will still win performance bonuses and receive options this year. He will hardly go penniless — and he may even make up the difference next year. But, while it may turn out to be a futile gesture in a difficult pay negotiation, it is not a completely empty one. The chairman will undoubtedly be £160,000 worse off for now, his directors will also suffer a pay cut and department heads' salaries are frozen.

The intention of all this frugality is to set an example to a workforce that is being pressured to accept a tough three-year pay deal. Vauxhall employees have been offered just 2.5 per cent this year, and a rise matching inflation for the succeeding two years. In other words, there will be no real wage increase for three years, whatever improvements are made to productivity.

But the climate in which Vauxhall's UK subsidiary exists is a hostile one. Britain's geography and strong currency count against it when it is compared with other European sites. Europe itself is not a great success for General Motors. Vauxhall's parent, when set against the Far East, Vauxhall's two plants, in Luton and Ellesmere Port, may genuinely face closure unless Mr Reilly can persuade his American bosses that costs can be held down.

To that end, his bold gesture may win over a few hearts and minds on the factory floor. British industrial relations have long been plagued by an "us and them" culture, in which management and workers have seen each other in confrontation. But the best companies have understood what should have been obvious to any student of human nature: that employees feel more loyal to managements that are human rather than remote, egalitarian rather than elitist and prepared to take their share of restraints urged upon workers.

Army officers have always known not to expose their soldiers to any danger that they would not undergo themselves. Leading from the front is a fine way to ensure loyalty, motivation and co-operation. That is not to say that all chairmen should henceforth have a salary-free year, nor that executives do not deserve to be paid a good rate for the job. But Mr Reilly's gesture is an imaginative contribution to a tense and difficult negotiation. The unions at Vauxhall should bury their cynicism and accept their chairman's act in good faith. If they do, Mr Reilly will doubtless survive and prosper — but so will the plants on which all their jobs depend.

ART AND ABUSE

Are the works of a sinner tainted by his sin?

Eric Gill was a visionary and innovative artist, whose sculptures and bas-reliefs broke new ground in their economy and simple, sweeping lines. A designer whose talents are forever linked with his uncluttered typeface, his most famous commission was the series of tableaux that now hang in Westminster Cathedral to mark the stations of the Cross. An inspiration to the devout and a testament to his own spirituality, these sculptures are now a cause of anguish for Catholics. For it has recently emerged that their creator's life was stained by a sin that our generation finds peculiarly difficult to forgive. Are the works of a sinner tainted by his sin? And if so, do the tableaux have a place in the House of God?

Years after his death in 1940, biographers have revealed what was once known only to his close associates: Gill was a man of voracious sexual appetite, whose partners included not only his sisters but even his teenage daughters. A radical who spurned convention, he justified his behaviour by propounding a new, liberated order that would transcend traditional rules.

Artists have often escaped public censure on the ground that they live by different mores. But incest and paedophilia break society's strictest taboos. How, it is now asked, can objects intended to inspire veneration and spirituality be dissociated from revulsion at Gill's lifestyle?

At other periods such conflicts would have been much reduced. Athenian democrats and Renaissance princes employed sculp-

tors as they did carpenters or masons. The artist was prized, well paid and even traded between states. If he were a pushy individualist in ancient Greece or a devil-worshipper in the Celestial City he might have problems. But if his personal behaviour failed the local morality tests he would not.

Today, however, we live under the shadow of the Romantic movement: art is the manifestation of the artist's mind; paintings and music are windows on the soul. Add to that a culture in which the daily private lives of artists are much less private and the concerns of the Catholic protesters are understandable enough.

Many great artists in history would suffer the censure of modern moralists. From Caravaggio to Michelangelo, Dali to Benjamin Britten, the men who produced profoundly spiritual works have led lifestyles long considered sinful by the Church. Should all works of the promiscuous, the cruel, the intolerant and the deviant be removed from public view?

Gill's critics argue that he is particularly troubling because of his place not in a museum but in the premier Catholic cathedral of Britain. Maybe. Much more troubling is the evidence that too many of those who serve the Church today, priests and laymen, have been accused of sexual abuse against children or have tolerated this evil around them. Rather than campaigning to remove works of art that in themselves are inspiring, protesters would better direct themselves against abuse by the living.

'Managed' church attendance figures

From Bishop Suffragan of Maidstone

Sir, Ruth Gledhill tells us confidently (April 13) that the Church of England is embracing "modern management techniques" in a desperate attempt to halt the decline in attendance.

In my five years as a bishop and 15 or so on the General Synod I am not aware of any "desperate attempts" to halt decline in attendance. No major synod reports or debates have directly addressed attendance decline, apart from one written with regard to the Church's outreach to children. The Decade of Evangelism was an idea that emanated at the last Lambeth Conference from African bishops, who are mainly working in areas of strong numerical growth, and is primarily about priorities in the life of the Church. It did not stem from any English desperation.

To be honest, I rather wish there was a more desperate mood in the Church with regard to making converts. The Decade of Evangelism has never been characterised by such feelings. Our churches are still dominated by a pastoral mentality. Too many of us seem to be content to minister only to those who already want to come. The vision of an outgoing national Church is fading fast.

However, the numbers situation is more hopeful, and complex, than simple talk of decline would suggest. First, the Diocese of Canterbury has recorded (modest) attendance growth over the last three years. I doubt if we are unique in this.

Secondly, studies in our diocese and in the Diocese of Wakefield suggest that the number of attenders on any given Sunday is only about 40 per cent of the total number of people who worship regularly. This is why the Church of England is thinking again about the sorts of statistics it should publish.

Yours etc,
GAVIN MAIDSTONE,
Bishop's House, Pet Lane,
Charing, Kent TN27 0DL
April 13.

From Mrs Judy Kidd

Sir, Might there possibly be a link between a decline in customer numbers of the Church of England and the secular interest in business organisation, value for money and brand image of "our" product?

Yours faithfully,
J.A. KIDD
(Head of Religious Studies),
Wycombe Abbey School,
High Wycombe,
Buckinghamshire HP11 1PE.
April 14.

From Mr W. S. Affleck

Sir, Lord Campbell of Alloway (letter, April 6) suggests that it would be in order for members of the House of Lords to oppose a Bill for the reform of the House.

A justification for a second chamber, as he points out, is that it should provide a veto to prevent legislation which is against the long-term interests of the country from reaching the statute book. To fulfil this function the second chamber must not be the rubber-stamping creature of the current Government.

If the Bill which ultimately comes before their lordships significantly compromises that ability and independence they should indeed seek to frustrate its passage.

Their lordships will then no doubt be accused of a self-serving attempt to preserve their privileges, particularly if the Government chooses to present a simple Bill to unseat hereditary peers with no other reforms. Their lordships would then need to recognise the distinction between protecting the function of the second chamber and blindly protecting its present composition — and comport themselves accordingly.

Yours sincerely,
W. S. AFFLECK,
Barley Hill, Watledge, Nailsworth,
Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 0AS.
100443.2430@compuserve.com
April 8.

From Mr Alan J. Kennard

Sir, According to a 1954 publication by the Hansard Society, a select committee on the House of Lords, known as the Rosebery Committee, reported in 1908 that "the numbers of the House within recent years have increased so largely that some reduction for legislative purposes is expedient".

At that time the House of Lords had a roll of 606, an increase of 20 per cent over the previous 25 years; it now has about 1,200 members, with another 30 or so likely to be created shortly.

The same committee also came to the conclusion that it was undesirable that the possession of a peerage should itself give the right to sit and vote in the House of Lords.

If a newly reformed House of Lords has 600 or more members, as is widely mooted, it would still have been too large in the eyes of Lord Rosebery.

Yours truly,
ALAN J. KENNARD,
4 Ashburnham Close, N2 0NH,
April 6.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Straw's 'robust' crime Bill under fire

From the Earl of Longford

Sir, The Home Secretary's article, "Crime and old Labour's punishment" (April 8), contains, as one would expect from an intelligent and high-minded man, many points of substance. I am not concerned here to argue the detailed merits of the Crime and Disorder Bill: insofar as it makes prosecution easier it could be helpful to society. But the heading of the article will horrify anyone with serious concerns for justice in the penal field.

I was chairman in 1964 of a committee set up by Harold Wilson, then Leader of the Opposition, to draw up a plan of penal policy. It contained six members of the subsequent Government, whose penal record was equal to anything in our history. It included the abolition of capital punishment and the introduction of parole.

It is simply no use Mr Straw pretending that he has arrived at a new penal policy as a result of personal enlightenment. He is of course aware that the present Government has continued the revolutionary approach of Michael Howard: "prison works". As a result the Home Office has reckoned that the numbers in prison will have doubled between 1993 and 2005, in spite of an official expectation of an increase in crime.

In recent Lords' debates no one not officially instructed has said a word in favour of Mr Straw's policy. The judiciary and the Churches are equally opposed to it.

I am an obsequious follower of the present Government, but I can only hope that a good Christian like Mr Straw will have gained new wisdom from his Easter observances.

Yours faithfully,
FRANK LONGFORD,
House of Lords,
April 9.

From Mrs Nicky Padfield

Sir, Jack Straw explains what pleases him most about the Crime and Disorder Bill: not simply the content of

the Bill, but the fact that "it is rooted in the experiences of local communities". The Government may be proud of the fact that it now listens to people's fears, but it also has a duty to try to understand the causes of crime and the implications of the measures it proposes. Will the Home Secretary's constituents not tell him that so-called "robust" legislation is no substitute for investment in education, in criminal justice agencies and in social services?

The causes of youth crime must be tackled by "restoring hope and opportunity". Adding further draconian complexity to the sentencers' armoury may give Jack Straw pleasure, but it does not provide a solution.

Yours faithfully,
NICKY PADFIELD,
Fitzwilliam College,
Cambridge CB3 0DG,
April 8.

From Mrs D. M. Forbes

Sir, The logical next step after Jack Straw's apology for deferring to the concerns of local communities is a return to the death penalty. This would be very popular among the people whose opinions (and votes) he values so highly.

He seems to forget that, whereas the constituent in his surgery can relate only his personal experience, "pressure groups" (presumably such as Nacro or Liberty) are made up of people who have spent years in close, everyday contact with both victims and offenders. They have the education and training which enables them to evaluate alternative means of dealing with both in a constructive way.

Home Secretaries should not seek popularity and easy, short-term solutions.

Yours faithfully,
DOROTHY FORBES,
59 Wheelers Lane,
Kings Heath,
Birmingham B13 0SE,
April 8.

From Miss Carol McKearney

Sir, Peter Riddell ("A winner whatever the odds", April 6) is right to expose the contradictions in Labour's taxation policies. The proposed National Lottery tax is a regressive tax. Lower income earners spend proportionately more on the lottery than those with higher incomes.

What are hailed as new areas of spending are, in reality, renamed areas of previous spending. Hundreds of millions of pounds were spent on new technology in schools by the former Manpower Services Commission and the Department of Employment, including training through the Technical Vocation Educational Initiative.

Millions more were spent through educational grant funding from the Department for Education and Science and later the DfEE. Most education authorities had their information technology training centre advisers and technicians. The fact that the curriculum of some of our pupils is supported by information communication technology and for others it is not is the result of school management inertia.

Whilst we all might agree that spending in these areas is desirable, this has always been counted as mainstream government spending. Taking money from the National Lottery is dishonest and an unfair tax on the less well off. It's pickpocketing — again!

Yours,
CAROL MCKEARNEY,
21 Walk Wood Rise, Beaconsfield,
Buckinghamshire HP9 1TU,
April 6.

From the Director General of Age Concern England

Sir, The Government's retreat on reducing the back-dating of social security benefit claims from three months to one (report, April 7) will be welcome news to everyone campaigning against poverty, including those of us working to improve older people's incomes.

More than one million of the poorest pensioners did not claim up to £1.7 billion in benefits in the period 1995-96. This is because they do not realise they are entitled to do so, or because they cannot cope with the complicated array of forms, or sometimes because they feel ashamed to ask for benefits.

When Age Concern advisers persuade or assist older, particularly dis-

abled people to claim, the increased income improves their mobility and independence considerably, for example by enabling them to buy a few hours of home help or a taxi to go shopping.

It is reassuring that the Government has listened to those of us who opposed the time-limit reduction, and we hope that their nine area pilot studies will make a start in improving benefits take-up. What is needed, however, is a nationwide initiative to ensure that older people receive all the benefits to which they are entitled.

Yours faithfully,
SALLY GREENGROSS,
Director General,
Age Concern England,
Astral House,
1268 London Road, SW16 4ER,
April 7.

Human Rights Bill

From Mr Michael Bartlett

Sir, Members of the Religious Society of Friends seek to affirm that there is something of God in everyone. The secular counterpart of that affirmation is the recognition of the universality of human rights. The current amendment seeking to exempt the Churches from the provisions of the Human Rights Bill (letters, February 5 and March 6) would undermine that very universality.

The amendment is unnecessary, in that Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights explicitly safeguards the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion — indeed the protection of religion and religious traditions from the encroachment of the State is at the heart of the

How Nazi spies in US lost their cover

From Mr Leslie Thomas

Sir, You are right in suggesting (report and leading article, April 9) that the landing of German agents in the United States in the early days of the war was loaded with fate.

While researching for my 1989 book, *Orders For New York*, a fictionalised version of the events, I was given access to the FBI files in Washington. I discovered from them that during their "familiarisation training" the would-be spies marched around the German countryside singing American songs, much to the mystification and concern of the inhabitants.

Having almost drowned upon landing from the submarine off Long Island, the agents tramped across the dunes to Amagansett station where, despite the alarm being raised, they travelled on the Sunday morning train to New York. A second party, which landed in Florida, simply walked up the beach and waited for a bus into Jacksonville.

George Dasch, the leader of the enterprise, had great difficulty in giving himself up. After several abortive calls he had to wait several hours in a Washington hotel before the FBI arrived.

Six of the party, as you report, went to the electric chair. However, the FBI chief made the most of his triumph. The youngest spy, aged 18, had a tooth extracted the day before his execution. Dasch, having served only a short prison sentence, returned to Germany, where at one time he was employed as a barman at a US servicemen's club. He was known as "George the Spy".

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE THOMAS,
The Walton Canonry,
The Close,
Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 2EN,
April 14.

From Mr Alan J. McKay

Sir, I write to congratulate Bill Frost on his article, "The aftermath of the affair" (features, April 8), which addressed the difficult issue of marital infidelity. I thought that he handled this matter with sensitivity, perception and honesty.

Perhaps unwittingly, he identified several important issues for our society in which stable, happy, lifelong marriages have become the exception. Central to his argument is the fact that his marriage, and perhaps many others, did not survive infidelity. The bond of trust on which marriage depends is always — and usually irrevocably — altered by unfaithfulness.

Every marriage passes through unstable periods and when complete mutual trust is compromised, the marriage becomes vulnerable.

It was illuminating that when Mr Frost tried to return to Jane, his lover, this relationship failed again because the past record of both partners had eroded their confidence in one another.

I would contend that the erosion of trust which infidelity induces within marriage has a parallel in promiscuity outside marriage. I have no doubt that our society would benefit from a resolute affirmation that promiscuity is never "casual", and has permanent detrimental effects on all subsequent trust-based relationships.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN J. MCKAY,
23 Lubnalg Road,
Glasgow G43 2RY,
April 9.

From Dr Sue Atkinson

Sir, I have received a second-class letter from the Inland Revenue (complete with a pre-paid first-class reply envelope) asking me to pay them a balance of £0.01.

Yours faithfully,
SUE ATKINSON,
3A Court Farm Road,
Morningsham, SE9 4JH,
April 14.

From Dr Georges Ware

Sir, My junk mail includes an increasing number of CD-Rom compact discs sent by hopeful Internet service providers. I now have over 50, collected since last autumn, and wonder if any reader can suggest a use for them.

I have tried using them as beer mats but they are not quite flat.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGES WARE,
85 Cranbrook Road,
Bristol BS6 7BZ,
georges.ware@bristol.ac.uk
April 15.

From Dr John H. Greensmith

Sir, Our postman recently delivered to a neighbour a yellow plastic duck, the sort you play with in the bath or shoot at the fairground. Unencumbered by wrapping, it had the addressee on its wing and a stamp on its bottom.

You can't do that sort of thing with e-mail can you?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN GREENSMITH,
36a North Street,
Downend, Bristol BS16 5SW,
April 14.

Such an amendment could send a message that the Churches which have been at the forefront of protection of human rights would wish to exempt themselves from fundamental human-rights standards. It would set a precedent for other groups which might seek to exempt themselves from the provisions of the Act.

The rule of law depends on the equality of everyone before the law. The present amendment would offend against that principle.

Yours ever,
MICHAEL BARTLETT
(Parliamentary Liaison Secretary),
The Religious Society of Friends in Britain,
Friends House,
173 Euston Road, NW1 2BJ,
michaelb@qualter.org.uk

OBITUARIES

MICHAEL WEITZMAN

Michael Weitzman, Reader in Hebrew at University College London, died on March 21 aged 51 after a thrombosis. He was born in London on July 26, 1946.

From childhood Michael Weitzman showed a genius for Semitic languages. He devoted a lifetime's study to them. He cultivated them not merely for their own sake but as a tool to unlock the hidden background and meaning of the Bible.

Unusually, however, he was not only one of Britain's leading biblical scholars, but also an outstanding mathematician. The two disciplines combined made him a relentless opponent of theories that purport to find messages of contemporary relevance encoded in the ancient Hebrew Bible text. Weitzman was too courteous a scholar to brand them as "rubbish". But on grounds of statistical theory alone he dismissed them as untenable.

Given the prominence of the topic in the current bestseller lists, and its adoption by fundamentalist polemicists, his work inevitably pushed Weitzman into the limelight, especially within the Anglo-Jewish community. And although he took to public life as reluctantly as a duck takes to snow, he never dodged controversy when it was thrust upon him. His ultimate allegiance was to truth rather than to religious doctrine.

That made him a unique and beneficent figure on the current Anglo-Jewish scene. It is given between fundamentalist orthodox and a growing stream that is open to the scholarship and the social trends which surround it. Weitzman was almost alone in bridging that doctrinal gulf, deepened as it is by strong emotional commitments.

He himself was a devoutly practising Jew. That should have put him in the fundamentalist camp. But his allegiance to scholarship made him ready to lecture to any audience, whatever religious label it tied to itself. And he both lectured to and acted as an external examiner to the Leo Baeck College, the London seminary for non-orthodox rabbis.

For daring to defy the current orthodox conventions, Weitzman found himself banned by an ultra-orthodox rabbi in Edgware, where he lived and worshipped, from publicly reading from the sacred biblical scrolls during Saturday morning services.

Weitzman's courage and innate strength made him flick away the martyrdom now on offer. He found a more open, though still orthodox, congregation in which to act as cantor and scroll reader. And he continued to the early end of his life to serve scholarship by teaching all who wished to learn, no matter their religious or secular allegiance.

Michael Perry Weitzman was born into a family with a strong commitment to both Jewish scholarship and communal life. His father, Adrian, was a preparatory school teacher, and the family are distantly related to two Israeli Presidents, Chaim Weizmann, the first holder of that office, and Ezer Weizman, its present occupant. A child prodigy, he was winning prizes from an early age.



By the age of 16 he had passed his A-levels and won a scholarship in biblical Hebrew and classics to St John's College, Cambridge. He had to wait a year before taking it up, which he did in 1963.

Four years later he graduated with a double first. In between he scooped up most of the prizes on offer in his field, twice winning the Wright Prize. A year after graduating at Cambridge, he added a first class degree in mathematics from London University.

He thought of becoming an actuary. But the pull of biblical scholarship proved too strong, and he took up a lectureship in the department of Hebrew studies at University College London. Some ten years later the financial demands of bringing up a young family in London proved a strain on his lecturer's salary, and Weitzman left University College to work as an actuary. But the work bored him and within six months he was back at his university post, which had been kept open for him by a far-sighted professor.

As an academic he never subordinated teaching to research. But he nevertheless managed to produce a stream of scholarly papers for mathematical journals as well as those devoted to Semitic and biblical studies. He continued to straddle both disciplines with papers on such subjects as "Statistical patterns in Hebrew and Aramaic Roots".

Weitzman also served as a consultant etymologist to the Oxford English Dictionary. And when a hitherto little known civilisation was unearthed at Ebla, in Syria, he deciphered its language, and then wrote a popular book about it with the Anglo-Jewish author Chaim Bermant. Seven years his senior, Bermant remained a friend, and Weitzman attended his funeral only two months before he himself died.

For his last ten years Weitzman worked on a major critical edition of the Peshitta, the Syriac version of the Hebrew Bible for early Christians. Just before his death he sent the corrected proofs back to Cambridge University Press, and it is due for publication in October. It is expected to be his lasting monument.

Weitzman was promoted to a readership at University College only last year, a promotion that in the eyes of his students and some of his colleagues had long been overdue. But he was a man who knew neither grudge nor resentment, and his work was adorned by a personal modesty that eludes many a lesser scholar.

Weitzman married Anita Haimon in 1980 and is survived by her and their son and daughter.

MAURICE STANS

Maurice Stans, US Commerce Secretary under Richard Nixon, died on April 14 aged 90. He was born on March 22, 1908.



OF ALL the players in the 1972-75 political drama known as Watergate, Maurice Stans, the bag-man for the Republican Party, was the most curious. As finance chairman of the Committee to Re-elect the President in 1972, Stans stood at the centre of the Republican money-raising activities, yet subsequently denied all knowledge that cash was diverted to fund a dirty tricks campaign.

Although investigated and prosecuted in connection with the Watergate break-in, Stans was never convicted of any knowing violation of the law with regard to the scandal. He did plead guilty to five non-willful violations of campaign finance laws, paid a \$5,000 fine, and then devoted the remainder of his life to trying to clear his name of the taint associated with Watergate.

Maurice Stans was the son of a Belgian house painter who had migrated to the United States. While taking a business course at night school, he obtained a job as an office boy for a Chicago accounting firm and three years later he became a partner.

In 1953 he moved to Washington to become a consultant to Congress, and in 1955 he was appointed Deputy Postmaster General, earning a reputation for fiscal competence. In 1958 President Eisenhower appointed Stans Director of the Budget, but he returned to private enterprise once the Democrats took over the White House in 1961.

and said afterwards the secret was to ask contributors for hefty donations. "Nobody ever gets offended by being asked for too much. People are flattered by being asked to give more than they can afford," he remarked.

According to Watergate testimony, it was Stans who authorised the campaign treasurer Hugh Sloan to pay G. Gordon Liddy \$83,000, money that would be used to finance a dirty tricks campaign, including the burglary in the Democratic Party headquarters at the Watergate complex.

Stans insisted he never knew of Liddy's plan and that he was instructed by party officials that Liddy was authorised to receive money.

During the Watergate hearings, Stans pleaded guilty to three counts of violating the reporting sections of the Federal Election Campaigns Act and two counts of accepting illegal campaign contributions.

In a separate case, Stans was accused of trying to influence the Security and Exchange Commission in exchange for a \$200,000 donation from the financier and Nixon confidant, Robert Vesco. He was subsequently acquitted of that charge.

After the White House Watergate tapes were released, Stans wrote that he believed President Nixon was scheming to use him as a fall-guy. According to his claim, Nixon was planning to nominate him for an ambassadorship, intending that the controversial confirmation hearings would draw attention away from his own wrongdoing at the White House.

Stans left Washington and Republican Party politics in 1976, settling in California and opening a financial consulting firm. In a concerted effort to clear his name, Stans wrote two books: *The Terrors of Justice: The Untold Side of Watergate* (1985) and *One of the President's Men: Twenty years with Eisenhower and Nixon* (1995).

In 1992, shortly before the twentieth anniversary of Watergate, Stans took the remarkable step of writing to more than 25 newspapers across the United States, urging them to exercise discretion in their characterisations of him and his role in the affair.

FRANCES MacCURTAIN

Frances MacCurtain, voice specialist, died on March 26 aged 61. She was born on October 12, 1936.



IN A life devoted to understanding the human voice, Frances MacCurtain worked as a speech therapist, pioneered training methods, helped to design scientific apparatus and founded VoicePower, an executive voice-training company. Her wish was to foster global awareness of the need to speak clearly, concisely and convincingly under stress, and she helped to identify the factors impeding effective speech. She was never afraid to challenge clients' fears or rigid attitudes, consistently inspired them with her enthusiasm and often had a powerful effect on the whole of their professional and personal lives.

Frances MacCurtain was born in Belfast but grew up in England. Dissuaded by her businessman father from becoming an actress, she qualified as a speech therapist at the age of 23. Her particular interest was the stammer. Working in Manchester in 1960 she met and married

Tony Connor, a poet. They had three children, but she continued her clinical work and began lecturing at Manchester Polytechnic.

In 1979, after divorcing and remarriage, she took a second degree in phonetics at University College London. She also led a three-year project to

investigate laryngectomy measurement at Middlesex Hospital.

Two years on, she became the first person in Britain to receive a doctorate in the field of speech sciences. From this work she developed an innovative procedure to photograph and measure the vibrations of the vocal folds. For the first time the medical world could actually see the voice functioning.

With characteristic drive, she also, within that year, contributed to three technical papers, appeared on *Tomorrow's World*, lectured at Columbia University, the American Speech and Hearing Association and the Royal College of Surgeons, worked part-time at the department of human communication science, at University College and continued her project at the Middlesex. It was a frenetic period and she looked back on it with delight.

MacCurtain loved children and had a strong interest in their development. In 1985 she received an honorarium to design a voice clinic at Great Ormond Street Hospital, and she went on to be an honorary consultant speech scientist. She was also honorary research speech therapist at the Royal Marsden and took part in the Cranport Voice Research Programme in Toronto.

Continuing her research, she worked with IBM technicians on the design of a computer programme for speech clinics, which led to the invention of the IBM Speech Viewer. Working in a corporate environment, MacCurtain realised that companies might be losing a competitive advantage through inability to present themselves effectively, and that her own investigations of healthy voices under stress might be applied to this problem.

The Speech Viewer and its software became an invaluable element of the courses she later gave to over 5,000 people, from captains of industry to anxious young managers.

In 1988 MacCurtain founded VoicePower, which combined voice training with presentation skills. The courses she designed were soon in demand by large national and international organisations including BT and SmithKline Beecham.

Talking to executives in language they understood - but using theatrical gifts that were all her own - she taught relaxed breathing and stress-release techniques. This enabled her pupils to remove what she described in her down-to-earth way as the "vocal hazards: the ums and ers, the gables and the drone". She soon built a team of specialist coaches, inspiring colleagues and students to reach levels of excellence they had scarcely imagined.

Eager to promulgate her knowledge and methods, MacCurtain formed the limited company Zarbo early last year, and just before her death she wrote the script of *The Seven Ages of Voice* for the BBC World Service.

Frances MacCurtain's prosperous origins and commanding good looks might have cut her off from people, but her iconoclastic intelligence and deep concern for people meant that she was well liked and well loved. Behind her hectic public life lay a private world of wide reading and meditation.

She was married and divorced twice, but is survived by two sons and a daughter from her first marriage.

DADA KONDKE

Dada Kondke, Indian actor and comedian, died from a heart attack on March 14 aged 69. He was born in Bombay in August 1928.

rudimentary and predictable storylines are rendered exciting by melodrama, overacting and dialogue replete with *double entendres*.

Born to a millworker's family in what was then the only Indian city with a proletarian culture, Kondke started life as a factory hand before turning to theatre. He tirelessly worked the *tamasha* circuit in and around Bombay before tasting real success in a bawdy 1964 play by Vasant Sabnis, the noted Marathi playwright.

Under the tutelage of the legendary film director Bhalji Pendharkar, Kondke made

the transition to celluloid. His first film, *Tambdi Mai* ("Red Soil"), was released in 1969. Donning a pencil-thin moustache and his trademark loose baggy shorts, which appeared perpetually in danger of coming off, Kondke exercised a strong hold over working-class audiences in Bombay.

Many of his movies revolved around the travails of a country bumpkin forced by circumstance to leave his rural idyll and enter the seductive yet dangerous terrain of the big city. Along the way, he would encounter buxom women and sundry villains, before finally wielding his *lathi* or staff in a fustigous fight for justice.

Though he was not the first actor to try to adapt the *tamasha* to film, Kondke took it to new extremes. His suggestive film titles and risqué dialogues had cinema halls packed. He had a large fan following among women.

Kondke started producing films in 1971 with *Songadya* ("The Clown"), in which he played a buffoon-like character, and soon began directing. During the Emergency which the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, declared in 1975, several of Kondke's films ran into trouble with the censors, among them his 1976 farce, *Pandu Hawaldar* ("Pandu the Policeman"), a picaresque account of an Indian equivalent of PC Plod, which was not appreciated by authority.

In recent years, Kondke used his considerable popularity to campaign for the Shiv Sena, the right-wing political party currently in power in Maharashtra. Kondke remained a bachelor.



With the actress Swarna in the film *Aage Ki Soch*

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

0171-782 7344

PUBLIC NOTICES

STYMOON-BISSET, ALASTAIR CLIVE, Chartered Clerk, 21, Market Street, London, EC1A 1BB. 1996, purchase to Gendron, St. Helens, 22, York Street, London EC4A 3DF before 15th June 1998.

LEGAL NOTICES

In the Matter of F. LEINER & COMPANY LIMITED and in the Matter of the Liquidation of the said company, by and by the Liquidator, Messrs. John Charles Jeffrey, Bankers, 111, Gower Street, London, W.P. 1998, give notice that on 13 March 1998 we were appointed Liquidator of the above named company, which is being wound up, and we are now in receipt of the 24 April 1998 and we are in receipt of the full details of the company's assets and liabilities, and we are in receipt of the full details of the company's debts and claims, and we are in receipt of the full details of the company's liabilities and claims, and we are in receipt of the full details of the company's assets and liabilities, and we are in receipt of the full details of the company's debts and claims, and we are in receipt of the full details of the company's liabilities and claims.

LEGAL NOTICES

MCCORMACK SUBMARINE CABLE SYSTEMS LIMITED IN MEMBERSHIP BY SHARES LIQUIDATION. Notice is hereby given that on 21 March 1998 John Charles Jeffrey, Banker, 111, Gower Street, London, W.P. 1998, was appointed Liquidator of the above named company. Notice is hereby given that the creditors of the above named company are required to send in their claims to the Liquidator, Messrs. John Charles Jeffrey, Bankers, 111, Gower Street, London, W.P. 1998, and if so required by notice in writing from an officer, personally or by their solicitors, of the company at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice, or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution of the assets of the company.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Messrs. John Charles Jeffrey, Bankers, 111, Gower Street, London, W.P. 1998, on 12th April 1998 at 12.00 noon for the purpose of having a full statement of the position of the company read and the appointment of their Liquidator, and for the purpose, if thought fit, of appointing a Liquidator and of approving the terms of any arrangement proposed for the winding up of the company. The meeting may include a resolution specifying the terms on which the Liquidator is to be remunerated and the meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting. Creditors are invited to send in a full statement of their claims and to submit a proxy which shall be lodged on or before the date of the meeting. Creditors who are unable to attend the meeting may, if they so desire, appoint a proxy to attend on their behalf. The meeting shall be held at the offices of Messrs. John Charles Jeffrey, Bankers, 111, Gower Street, London, W.P. 1998, unless otherwise notified. DATED THIS 23RD DAY OF MARCH 1998. BY ORDER OF THE BOARD. J. C. JEFFREY, LIQUIDATOR.

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Messrs. John Charles Jeffrey, Bankers, 111, Gower Street, London, W.P. 1998, on 12th April 1998 at 12.00 noon for the purpose of having a full statement of the position of the company read and the appointment of their Liquidator, and for the purpose, if thought fit, of appointing a Liquidator and of approving the terms of any arrangement proposed for the winding up of the company. The meeting may include a resolution specifying the terms on which the Liquidator is to be remunerated and the meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting. Creditors are invited to send in a full statement of their claims and to submit a proxy which shall be lodged on or before the date of the meeting. Creditors who are unable to attend the meeting may, if they so desire, appoint a proxy to attend on their behalf. The meeting shall be held at the offices of Messrs. John Charles Jeffrey, Bankers, 111, Gower Street, London, W.P. 1998, unless otherwise notified. DATED THIS 23RD DAY OF MARCH 1998. BY ORDER OF THE BOARD. J. C. JEFFREY, LIQUIDATOR.

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE 0171-680 6878 OR FAX: 0171-481 9313

Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 2.30pm two days prior to insertion.

WIFE-BEATING.

It is fortunate that we are not often called upon to criticize the administration of public justice. When, however, we observe repeated instances, consistently increasing in number, of a leniency in dealing with a class of crimes which, unluckily, bring disgrace on the national character, we cannot avoid pointing out the danger of allowing such misplaced mercy to grow into a settled rule. Wife-beating is a vice almost peculiar to England, and in the "good old times," when coarse brutality was supposed to be characteristic of manliness, it excited scarcely more reprobation than those gentlemanly accomplishments, cock-fighting and bull-baiting. But within this present century we have progressed in humanity as well as in the material part of civilization.

Every day, however, the reports of our police courts and of our criminal tribunals still repeat the tale of savage and cowardly outrages upon women; and every day we have reason to marvel, not without a mixture of indignation, at the leniency with which some of our Judges treat offences of this kind. On Saturday Charles Westport, a tall, powerful man, 24 years of age, described as a labourer, was arraigned before Mr Commis-

ON THIS DAY

April 16, 1872

A leading article, based on numerous similar cases, called for harsher sentences, regardless of sex, to "reduce the misery of which English women of the lower classes have so much reason to complain."

injured eye. The learned Judge pointed out that in all probability the prisoner did not form the distinct intention of knocking the woman's eye out when he struck her these repeated blows. The Jury declined to find the prisoner guilty of feloniously wounding, which would have compelled Mr Commissioner Kerr, however leniently disposed, to pass a sentence of penal servitude. They brought in a verdict of unlawfully wounding, and the Judge, with an effusion of many moral sentiments, sentenced the prisoner to four months' hard labour, treating the case merely as one of assault.

One might suppose from this observation that it was one of an Englishman's legal rights to give his wife a black eye, and to do so, too, in a such a reckless way as to inflict by a sort of accident a much graver injury. If the law empowers a Judge to inflict a severe sentence for unlawfully wounding, it is certainly a strange policy to inflict a light one on the ground that only a common assault, such as husbands are often guilty of, was intended. This is surely the way to encourage the commission of such assaults, and to multiply the chances of those horrible maimings and disfigurements to which they so often lead...

Imperial College OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE. PROSTATE CANCER RESEARCH FUND. We use a new regenerative therapy based at the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine. The Fund supports highly innovative, pioneering research into early diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer. Please send support to PCRF c/o Mrs Wendy McGovern, CSTA, Midway Dept, London SW17 2BZ. Tel: 0171 594 5385.

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Rubin and Waigel put pressure on Japan

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

US TREASURY Secretary Robert Rubin and his German counterpart Theo Waigel yesterday emphasised that they would step up pressure on Japan to spell out its plans to revive its moribund economy, in a tense start to the three-day gathering of G7 finance ministers in Washington.

On the eve of the talks, which coincide with the spring meeting of the International Monetary Fund, Japan has hit out strongly at the fund for criticising its response to its worst economic plight since the Second World War.

The fund itself came under fierce attack from congress-

ional leaders and conservative commentators as the Clinton Administration turned up the heat to try to secure more cash for its rescue efforts.

The Asian financial crisis has inevitably dominated the agenda at the meetings, fuelled by the IMF's pessimistic assessment of the region's prospects in its global economic survey published on the eve of the talks.

Hikaru Matsunaga, Japan's Finance Minister, appeared anxious to calm concern, indicating that he planned to spell out devices to stimulate growth. But earlier this week he hit out at the IMF for failing to appreciate the full benefits of the ¥16,000 billion (£73 billion) stimulus package announced last week, in a sign of Tokyo's growing irritation with international criticism. He predicted growth of 1.9 per cent this year.

The package, announced after months of intensifying international pressure, has been viewed coolly by the markets and described as inadequate by Western diplomats. The IMF expects Japan to show, at best, zero growth this year, and has given a warning that this estimate is probably too high. As a result of the Japanese slump, the fund lowered its projections for this year's world economic growth for the second time in four months to 3.1 per cent.

As the annual meetings opened, the IMF predicted that the US was likely to survive the Asian crisis unharmed. But despite showering predictable compliments on the performance of the US economy, the report cautioned against triumphalism, noting that US stock and bond markets were highly vulnerable to a sudden slump.

The meetings come as the Clinton Administration faces a hard fight in Congress to raise the US contribution to the fund by \$18 billion (£11 billion). Mr Clinton and Mr Rubin have thrown their weight behind the frantic lobbying on Capitol Hill, arguing that the IMF is needed to prevent or contain crises such as that afflicting Asia. But the fund's opponents say that it encourages crises, because governments know the safety net is there. Many Republicans and some Democrats believe that American cash should not be used to bail out profligate foreign governments and international banks that have lent unwisely.

Tokyo data highlights problems

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE Japanese economy suffered another setback yesterday with the publication of new data showing a sharp fall in industrial production and the largest monthly decline in Tokyo department store sales.

Industrial production slumped 3.9 per cent in February compared with an original estimate of a 3.3 per cent fall.

Tokyo department store sales slumped 21 per cent in March — the largest recorded fall since records began in 1965.

Economists said the sales figures were a strong indication of just how depressed the consumer sector has become in recent months. Analysts are worried that despite the latest package of tax cuts, consumers remain reluctant to spend in the current economic climate and are more likely to save the extra cash.

The yen, however, enjoyed a firmer day on foreign exchanges as traders concluded that G7 leaders would issue a communiqué in support of a stronger yen. It initially climbed from 129.32 to the dollar to 129.05, before doubts set in about the likely strength of the G7 comments, sending the yen slightly lower.



Looking up: David Tye, left, chairman, with Andrew Wilson, chief executive

Rugby to expand portfolio

RUGBY GROUP, the property investor based in London, is to spend up to £60 million expanding its portfolio, focusing on sites in Notting Hill Gate and South Kensington (Carl Mortished writes).

The property group, which has about a third of its assets in Covent Garden, reported a 24 per cent rise in net assets per share to 190p at January

31 and a 60 per cent uplift in pre-tax profit to £3.79 million for the year.

Rugby is seeking new locations where it can emulate its Covent Garden success. Andrew Wilson, chief executive, said the policy was to amass strategic holdings of mixed retail, office and residential properties at lowish rents. In May last year, Rugby paid £9

million for an estate of ten properties in the Strand.

According to Mr Wilson rents in Zone A space have risen from £115 to £150 per sq ft. "In Covent Garden, they have reached £450," he said.

During the year, Rugby and joint venture partner UBS Capital paid £60 million to Grosvenor Estate for 32 properties in Mayfair and Belgravia.

Pensions mis-selling provisions to rise at Lloyds

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

LLOYDS TSB is to increase its provisions against pensions mis-selling in the light of the Government's recent announcement to extend the scope of the pensions mis-selling review.

Sir Brian Pitman, Lloyds TSB chairman, speaking at the bank's annual meeting in Glasgow, said: "During 1997, provisions for possible redress for purchasers of pensions policies were increased by £100 million, raising the total group provision made for this purpose to £300 million."

The compensation provisions are to pay for those who were encouraged to give up their rights to occupational schemes in order to take out personal pensions.

Earlier this year, the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the new super-regulator, increased the scope of the personal pensions mis-selling review. According to its calculations, up to a further two million people could have been misled into personal pensions, in addition to the 600,000 that are already within the scope of the review.

Many companies are expected to increase their compensation provisions, as the extension of the review will more than double the total cost to the industry to £11 billion.

Sir Brian said: "In March the FSA produced a consultation paper setting out the requirements for the review of Phase II — that is the non-priority pensions. It is likely that this second stage of the pensions review will require us to make further provisions in 1998."

Some observers believe that companies will have to double their provisions. This would push Lloyds TSB provisions to £600 million. Others to face an increase include Prudential: its provisions are £400 million.

The National Association of Pension Funds has called on the Government to simplify pensions legislation. It claims that the 1,100 pages of tax legislation relating to pensions will hamper any move by the Government to encourage more people to save for retirement through simpler products.

TUC attacks anti-union bosses

THE TUC yesterday stepped up its campaign for full union recognition with an attack on leading employers who do not deal with unions (Christine Buckley writes).

The criticism comes ahead of Monday's emergency TUC meeting over the issue which has caused a rift between the Government and unions.

Highlighting Allied Domecq and Midland Bank among nine large employers which do not recognise unions, John Monks, the TUC general secretary, said: "Too many people in Britain are still being denied the basic democratic right to be represented through a union at work. They desperately need a new law

to redress some of the imbalance between employer and employee."

The TUC and the Government are at odds over the interpretation of Labour's manifesto pledge on granting union recognition. Union leaders are worried that the Government is to endorse the employers' wish that unions

should only be recognised if a majority of the workforce agrees. The TUC wants recognition granted on a ballot majority.

Midland Bank said that although it had derecognised the union for managerial ranks, it had established consultative committees. Allied Domecq did not comment.

Co-op Bank considers returning to home loans

BY RICHARD MILES BANKING CORRESPONDENT

CO-OPERATIVE Bank yesterday signalled that it may re-enter the mortgage market and offer the first "ethical" home loan.

The bank said that it was considering providing mortgages, as well as equity-release products for elderly customers whose chief asset is their home, as part of a major product expansion.

Mervyn Pedley, chief executive, said: "Many of our customers ask us if we can provide them with a mortgage because of our ethical approach."

The bank last year lifted pre-tax profits 21 per cent, to £55 million. Return on equity after tax stood at 23 per cent.

Costs rose 8 per cent, to £236.5 million, reflecting more customers and a £6 million charge for development work for the year 2000 and European monetary union. Provisions for bad and doubtful debts rose 11 per cent, to £26.3 million, but, as a percentage of retail lending, remain at 1.1 per cent. The net interest margin remained strong at 4.5 per cent.

During the year, the Co-operative Wholesale Society, the bank's sole shareholder, injected £10 million into the balance sheet, half of it by waiving its annual dividend.

Mr Pedley reiterated the bank's determination to stay a strong niche player, mainly serving the more prosperous consumer. About 70 per cent of its customers are AB in marketing terms and are young professionals.

City scorns plan for Midlands flotation

BANKERS poured scorn yesterday on the prospect of a stock market flotation by Birmingham Midshires, the building society at the centre of a bid battle between Halifax and Royal Bank of Scotland (Richard Miles writes).

They pointed out that a float was a *vote-void* from earlier statements and would take at

least 18 months to arrange. Others interpreted the reports as an effort to bolster the £780 million price offered by Halifax. RBS has refused to lift its £630 million offer despite the sharp rise in banking shares.

Haggling over price will delay payouts to the society's 1.2 million qualifying members. Commentary, page 27

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Nat Express told to sell Scottish CityLink

NATIONAL EXPRESS is to lose its stranglehold over Scotland's long-distance travel network after being forced to sell Scottish CityLink, the country's largest coach operator, in return for the ScotRail franchise. Nigel Griffiths, the minister for competition, has waved through National Express' 15-year tenure of ScotRail on condition that it relinquishes control of the coach network.

The company has been given eight weeks to find a buyer for CityLink, which dominates every remotely profitable long-distance route in Scotland. It is understood to be in talks with Stagecoach and FirstBus, for a price around £12 million. CityLink's bus division has suffered falling profits since it was acquired by National Express. In 1996 it made a pre-tax profit of £1.84 million (£1.9 million). Since ScotRail was passed to National Express, in March last year, it has been difficult to travel on public transport between two major Scottish cities without using a National Express service.

Fii to close factory

FII GROUP, the footwear manufacturer and supplier to Marks & Spencer, is to close one of its Northampton men's footwear factories with the loss of up to 110 jobs. Reducing margins and continuing pressure on prices were blamed. Most of the production will be transferred to the Fii factory at Bridgend, South Wales, while the rest will be sourced from India. The redundancies and relocation will cost about £700,000. Other operations are performing well and the board is confident of a satisfactory result for the year.

Reed Executive ahead

REED EXECUTIVE, the recruitment agency that invests 1 per cent of its profits in charity ventures, yesterday reported a 14 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £14 million in 1997. Turnover rose 19 per cent to £226.9 million. A final dividend of 1.5p lifts the total payout to 3p from 2.6p in 1996. Earnings rose to 18.7p a share from 15.6p. Alec Reed, chairman and owner of two thirds of the group, said he expected the company's rate of earnings growth to continue in 1998.

Kia in receivership

KIA MOTORS, South Korea's third-largest carmaker, has been put under court receivership as part of the Government's efforts to clean up debt-ridden conglomerates. Two rival South Korean conglomerates — Hyundai and Samsung — have expressed interest in taking over the troubled carmaker, which produced 780,000 vehicles last year. Kia's fate will depend largely on the policy of the Government, the largest shareholder, with a 30 per cent stake. Ford holds 16.9 per cent.

Kingfisher shares sold

RONALD GOLDSTEIN, a director of Kingfisher and co-founder of its Superdrug pharmacy chain, has sold 305,000 Kingfisher shares for £3.35 million. He sold the shares — 235,000 held in his name, and 70,000 held non-beneficially — at £10.99. Mr Goldstein has been a non-executive director of Kingfisher since 1990. He retains a beneficial holding of 4.3 million shares, worth £47 million, and a non-beneficial holding of 3.75 million shares. Kingfisher bought Superdrug in 1987.

WYG looks to grow

WHITE YOUNG GREEN, the recently merged construction services consultancy, is exploring opportunities for expansion in South Africa, the Middle East, Kazakhstan and Canada. Underlying pre-tax profits rose to £1.1 million, from £98,000, for the six months to December 31. Profits were struck before merger costs of £902,000. Underlying earnings were 3.7p (2p) a share. The interim dividend is 1.5p (2p). The shares fell 6p to 76½p.

IMI pays chief £445,000

GARY ALLEN, chief executive of IMI, the company whose interests include making copper tube and drinks dispensing equipment, was paid a £98,000 bonus last year. That lifted his total remuneration to £445,000, up from £419,000. Nick Paul, his deputy, was paid £301,000 (£277,000), including a £65,000 bonus. Before one-off items, IMI's pre-tax profits rose 6.5 per cent to £146.5 million last year, although unadjusted earnings slipped to 31.2p (31.5p) a share.

TOURIST RATES

Bank	Buy	Bank	Sell
Australia \$	2.69	Netherlands Gld	3.692
Austria Sch	20.61	New Zealand \$	3.19
Belgium Fr	65.48	Norway Kr	13.20
Canada \$	2.538	Portugal Esc	322.51
Cyprus Cyp£	0.927	S Africa Rd	9.16
Denmark Kr	12.11	Spain Ptas	200.01
Finland Mk	9.72	Sweden Kr	13.87
France Fr	10.80	Switzerland Fr	2.86
Germany Dm	3.18	Taiwan Twn\$	418.04
Greece Dr	551	USA \$	1.789
Hong Kong \$	13.86		
Iceland Iskr	133		
Ireland Pt	1.29		
Israel Sh	6.94		
Italy Lira	3163		
Japan Yen	232.17		
Malta	0.694		

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES RICH LIST 1998

BRITAIN'S RICHEST BUSINESSMEN

REVEALED THIS SUNDAY

Commentary, page 27

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No buoyancy in a Midlands float

If Michael Jackson is seriously considering flotation as an option for the Birmingham Midlands, it should be the cause of outrage amongst the building society's long-suffering members. Just who, they might ask, would stand to benefit from floating the society, apart from the professional advisers who have already made millions from its protracted flirtation with the Royal Bank of Scotland. Some carry Midlands might come to the conclusion that Mr Jackson himself could see some attractions in a flotation, although it is not so very long ago that he was suggesting that his society was too small to justify such an expensive route out of mutualism.

Why might he have changed his mind when the Midlands has not just one but two larger organisations keen to relieve it of its independence and trigger a windfall payment to the society's members? Last summer, Jackson was agreeable to the £630 million offer from the Royal Bank of Scotland, although the paperwork necessary to process the deal moved unconscionably slowly. So slowly, in fact, that the RBS offer was left behind by soaring prices of financial stocks and last month Halifax proffered £780 million for the society. Somehow, despite the higher value of this offer, Mr Jackson seems less than enthusiastic to clinch the deal. Yes, in theory RBS can cling to its 12-month

exclusivity deal and refuse to allow the Halifax offer to be put to Midlands members but all the indications are that a payment of a few million to cover costs and injured feelings would expedite an RBS exit and leave the way free for a beaming Mike Blackburn to offer his hand to Midlands' members. After months of waiting for the chance to splash out on the new computer, foreign holiday or other traditional windfall purchase, the odds are that they would snatch the Halifax offer.

But the impasse continues and now it seems that instead of paying off RBS, Jackson is contemplating spending many millions on buying plc status for the Midlands. Why? Given that bringing a mutual to market is not merely expensive but extremely long-winded, it is likely that the exclusivity agreement with RBS, which lasts until next January, would have elapsed before Midlands could be brought to the stock market.

Perhaps Jackson believes that Halifax is not offering a full price, but, whisper it gently, there is the risk that by next year some of the frenzy will have left financial markets and values will have sunk back. By then, of

course, Halifax may have lost interest and turned its acquisitive attentions elsewhere.

Which would be very unfortunate for those windfall-seeking Midlands members. Mr Jackson, however, would still be the chief executive of the society, with a remuneration package of more than £250,000 to console him. It might not be as attractive as the role on the RBS board that had been destined for him, but it is better than nothing.

Guessing game at the DTI

The President of the Board of Trade has decided that there is no reason why the Monopolies and Mergers Commission should investigate a deal which gives one company 90 per cent of one market and 50 per cent of another. This would be heartening news for Britain's corporate financiers were there

COMMENTARY by our City Editor

any indication that a logical thread runs through Margaret Beckett's pronouncements. As it is, the fact that she has given the go ahead to Investcorp's purchases of both Watmoughs and British Printing Corporation can be seen only as good news for the acquisitive Bahrainis but no guide to what idiosyncratic decisions may follow.

It is fine for GUS to take over Argos, should Argos shareholders allow it, but not for Littlewoods to takeover Freemans. Ladbroke structures its purchase of the Coral betting shop business so as to comply with previous MMC rulings but finds itself still thrust into undergoing a lengthy, and costly, MMC inquiry.

There are always voices of vested interest which will demand that mergers should be blocked but it is increasingly difficult for them to guess what cries of foul will sway Mrs Beckett. In the case of the

Investcorp purchases, the printing unions had voiced concern over the implications of such a concentration of business with one employer. From Investcorp's point of view, there is sound commercial logic in putting BPC and Watmoughs together, a fact which enabled the organisation to heftily trump the hostile offer for Watmoughs from the Canadian group, Quebecor. But publishers of the glossier of glossy magazines will now have little choice of where to take their contracts: the combined group, by any definition, will have a monopoly of gravure capacity for print runs of any scale.

If that is acceptable to Mrs Beckett, then perhaps she might be amenable to other deals which the market had previously expected her to veto. Would it really be unthinkable for Barclays and NatWest to get together just because they would have such a heavy presence in catering for small businesses and providing

credit cards? Who can say? Divining what amounts to competition policy in Britain is like trying to second guess tomorrow's weather or the whims of Zsa Zsa Gabor. If Mrs Beckett could spell out some sensible guidelines as to what is and is not acceptable, the business world would be in her debt. She will need to write them first.

To the Co-op, Post haste

The Co-operative Bank continues to demonstrate that a strong marketing stance can triumph over a less-than-glossy name. Its long-standing determination to be seen as an ethical player among more tarnished financiers has won it a high proportion of young, upwardly mobile customers. Unlike the Co-op retail business, the bank can claim that close to three-quarters of its customers come into the AB category.

High street rivals have been slow to notice the Co-op Bank's march but its success is breeding ambition and now chief executive Mervyn Pedley is intimating that he is in acquisitive mood. He has, however, already em-

barked on the move that could see the Co-op mounting a significant challenge to the leading high street banks. By linking with the Post Office, the bank has joined forces with the retailer that can still boast the highest foot fall in the land. If it makes sense for a bank to move into a supermarket, it makes even more sense for a bank to make use of the 15,500 Post Office counters.

At this stage, the link merely allows customers to make deposits and withdrawals at Post Offices but the Co-op should be able to build on that base. Despite the Government's hope that savings plans will soon be dispensed at the supermarket checkout, the environment is not the best for financial transactions. The Post Office, however, could with only a little imagination be turned into the one-stop financial shop that industry southsayers believe we need.

Tactical voting

IT HAS long been joked that eight economists locked in a room together will express eight different views. It would be a sorry day for the profession if each of these brain boxes were also to contradict his or her own view from month to month, swaying helplessly on every new statistic. The fact that the split on the MPC was exactly the same in March as in February gives us some hope that these economists know what they are doing.

Compaq down 96% as competitors cut prices

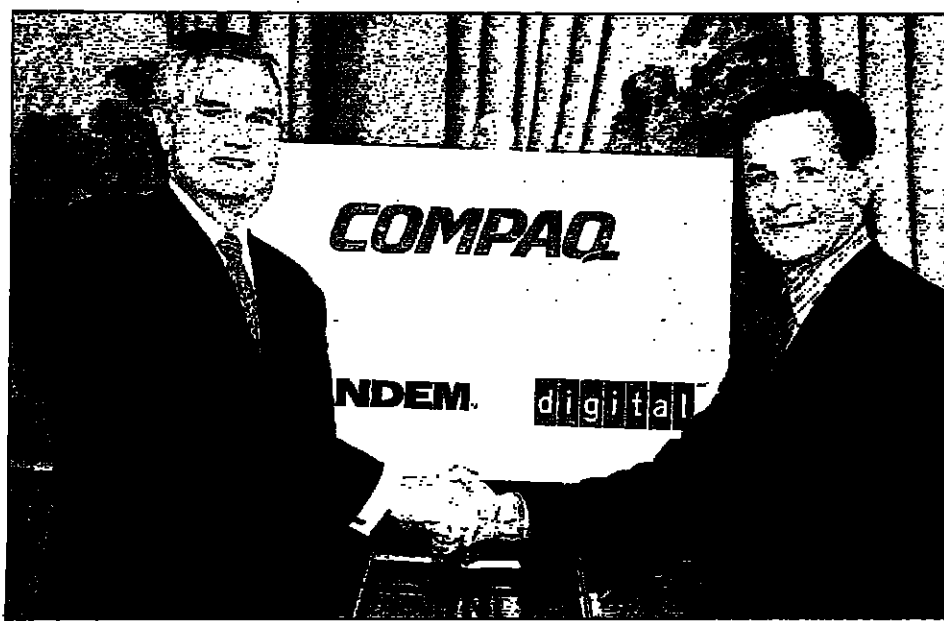
FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

COMPAQ COMPUTER, one of the world's biggest computer makers, saw its profits fall 96 per cent in the first quarter after fierce price cutting by competitors. The computer maker has also been hampered by excess inventory, leading to further price cutting.

Quarterly profits fell to just \$16 million, from \$414 million in the first quarter of the previous year. The downturn had been expected on Wall Street after a profit warning last month. Stephen Dube, an analyst with Wasserstein Perella Securities, said: "They are still struggling with trying to bring down inventory."

Compaq said that it had cut prices of its business desktop computers more steeply than expected because of intense competition for corporate customers. The warning was one of a series of gloomy outlooks from high-tech companies, including Intel and Motorola.

Compaq surprised the computer industry earlier this year with its planned \$9 billion acquisition of Digital Equipment. The move signalled the start of a shake-out in the sector, but inheriting Digital's problems could slow Compaq down further. The company yesterday said that it expects



Eckhard Pfeiffer, left, Compaq president, and Robert Palmer, Digital's chairman

the acquisition to be completed in the second quarter. The takeover and the inventory problems have depressed Compaq shares 33 per cent in the past two months. The company was also hit by a demand slowdown in Asia, whose financial crisis has hit many corporate customers.

In the first quarter, revenues rose by 8 per cent, to \$5.7 billion. The inventory problems are said to be on the way

to being solved. Quarter-to-quarter inventory decreased by 20 per cent, to \$314 million.

Earl Mason, Compaq's finance director, said: "It will take another quarter of adjustments to put the company's core business on a track of improved profitability."

Compaq was last night due to announce several new personal computers incorporating Intel's new Celeron microprocessor, a low-priced chip aimed

at inexpensive home computers. The announcement was to be made in conjunction with Intel's launch of the Celeron product line last night.

Compaq's endorsement of the Celeron was a big boost for Intel. Some analysts had speculated that Celeron would not receive universal support from PC companies, and that some top names in the industry, like Compaq, might not produce systems built around the chip.

Soros goes on an Argos buying spree

GEORGE SOROS, the billionaire financier, intrigued the market yesterday when it emerged that he had bought 1.2 million shares in Argos, the target of a £19 billion hostile bid by Great Universal Stores (Sarah Cunningham writes).

His Soros Fund Management paid 63p per share, taking its stake up to 1.39 per cent. He appears to be banking on GUS succeeding in its 65p bid.

Mr Soros's move also started speculation that GUS will buy Argos shares ahead of the closing date for the bid on April 24.

Morgan Grenfell is thought to have sold the shares to the Soros fund, and to have gradually whittled its 2½ per cent holding in Argos down to almost nothing. Gartmore has been another consistent seller.

Warburg banks £800,000 profit on Lonrho deal

By Jason Nisse

SBC WARBURG Dillon Read, the securities firm, yesterday banked £800,000 profit for less than three days' work helping Lonrho and Anglo American, the South African conglomerate, push through a deal that the two companies feared Lonrho shareholders might block.

Anglo sold a 40 million share stake in Lonrho — amounting to a little under 5 per cent of the British group — to Warburg, its financial adviser, on Wednesday evening.

On Thursday Warburg voted the shares in support of a complex deal that allowed Anglo to sell a 21 per cent stake in Lonrho to JCI, another South African company, which then sold the stake back to Lonrho for £177 million, or

103p a share. Anglo received valuable gold mining assets as part of the deal.

The deal, which was opposed by a large number of shareholders, was narrowly approved at Lonrho's extraordinary general meeting on Thursday.

Warburg, which bought the shares from Anglo at 100p each, revealed yesterday it had placed the shares with institutional investors at 102p each — making a profit of £800,000 having held the shares for less than three working days.

The Stock Exchange approved the transaction but it is understood to have made this conditional on Anglo not indemnifying Warburg for any potential loss it might have made on the sale.

Siebe buys US software supplier

SIEBE, the diversified engineering group, is paying \$147 million (£88 million) for Simulation Sciences, an American supplier of computer software for the oil and gas industry (Kathy Lipari writes).

Allen Yurko, Siebe's chief executive, said the acquisition will help the company to expand in the process simulation and modelling market. Siebe will finance the deal through existing credit lines. It said that the deal's net cash cost will be \$101 million after deducting SimSci's \$46 million cash balance.

SimSci had 1997 revenues of \$61 million and an \$8.7 million pre-tax loss after research costs.

Siebe in February paid \$375 million for Wonderware, a US industrial automation software group.

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AMP rules out immediate London listing

By Kathy Lipari

AMP, Australia's largest insurance and fund management group, has confirmed it will not immediately list on the London Stock Exchange when it demutualises in June.

The company plans to wait until its A\$11 billion (£4.2 billion) stock market debut is completed in Australia and New Zealand before moving onto the London market over the next couple of years.

AMP's prospectus will be available next month.

The insurer has about 170,000 policyholders in the UK through AMP UK and London Life, who will receive an average £2,800 windfall as a result of the flotation.

AMP recently bought Britain's Henderson Group for £370 million but was beaten last year in its bid for Scottish Amicable by Prudential.

Pennzoil to merge motor oil business

By Carl Mortished

PENNZOIL, owner of America's best-selling lubricants brand, is merging its motor oil and refining business with Quaker State, a manufacturer of lubricants and car care products. The combined business, with \$3 billion in sales, will be demerged, leaving Pennzoil as a pure upstream oil exploration company.

Pennzoil leads the important DIY motor oil business in America and the merger with Quaker State will increase its market share putting pressure on rivals such as Britain's Burmah Castrol. The new business will include the Pennzoil and Quaker State oil brands and Jiffy Lube Q-lube oil change brands as well as air freshener and car wax products. The two companies said they would reap savings of up to \$125 million.

Software progress lifts Ionica shares

By Chris Ayres

IONICA, the wireless telecoms company that suffered a disastrous flotation last July, yesterday began to revive lapsed City confidence by announcing its software upgrades were ahead of schedule.

The company, which recently appointed Mike Biden as chief executive and Gavin Morris as finance director, said its new software could double the capacity of its base stations. Shares in the company rallied 17p to 85p.

Mr Biden said: "The software upgrade should allow

Ionica to satisfy current demand in existing areas and accelerate the rate of customer additions across the network."

Ionica's share price collapsed from a high of 42p last summer to 68p when it announced delays to the building of its network.

Ionica also revealed a 22 per cent increase in customers in the fourth quarter to March 31 to almost 43,000. During the period, its coverage widened to 2.2 million homes.

Tempus, page 28

SCOTTISH WIDOWS

Notice is hereby given that the 184th Annual General Meeting of the members of the Society will be held within The Edinburgh Suite, Sheraton Grand Hotel, 1 Festival Square Edinburgh EH3 9SR on Tuesday 5 May 1998 at 11.30am for the following purposes:

- To consider the Accounts and Balance Sheets for the year ended 31 December 1997 and the Reports of the Directors and Auditors.
- To elect or re-elect Directors.
- To fix the remuneration of Directors.
- To re-appoint Price Waterhouse as Auditors.
- To authorise the Directors to fix the remuneration of the Auditors for the current year.
- To transact any other ordinary business proper to an Annual General Meeting.

A member is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote instead of him or her. A proxy need not also be a member of the Society. To be effective, proxies (and the power of attorney or other authority, if any, under which it is signed, or a notarially certified copy of that power of attorney) must reach the Society's principal office not less than two clear working days before the time for holding the Meeting. Members or proxies who intend to be present at the meeting should bring with them details of their proxy numbers or in the case of proxies the policy numbers in respect of which they have been appointed proxy, and in all cases some means of identification. Registration will commence at 11.00am.

Iain A Reid LLB CA
Company Secretary
15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh EH16 5BU

SCOTTISH WIDOWS

2 April 1998

Issued by Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society. Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

Five months ago, the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (better known as Liffe pronounced life) finally won permission to develop its own dream building. For years, Liffe camped out in scattered premises that quickly became too small. Now Sir Norman Foster, of Stansfeld airport fame, had designed what some thought the perfect home for the world's second biggest, already the world's second biggest, it would demolish scarcely half the City's Spitalfields market, a vast produce centre that history had left behind.

The centrepiece was to be a 100,000 square foot trading floor. For the first time, there would be a home fit for the exchange's famous brightly clad, shouting and gesticulating pit traders, who quickly came to symbolise London's otherwise invisible financial markets.

In futures, things move much faster than the real world. Symbolically, Liffe published its "centenary" history last year, when it was only 15 years old. No wonder that this greatest of our 1980s creations,

neglected the grim warnings issued 40 years ago by Professor C Northcote Parkinson.

"A perfection of planned layout is achieved only by institutions on the point of collapse" he wrote in Parkinson's Law. From New Delhi to AEI and Lloyd's, planners have striven to prove right his warning: "During a period of exciting discovery or progress, there is no time to plan the perfect headquarters. The time for that comes later, when all the important work has been done. Perfection is finality; and finality is death."

With luck, Liffe will shrug off this scare as a mid-life crisis. Its 220 shareholders have three months to review the plan. Most privately realise that the priority is to redesign the exchange itself to meet new challenges. The chance of needing a vast new building five years hence is slim. Liffe's pioneering efforts at

A mid-life crisis at Liffe



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

hedging interest rates, bond, commodity and share prices have already become the daily routine of commerce. The extrovert dynamism, colour and welcome vulgarity its founders imported from the Chicago exchange floors will all too probably give way to a colourless screen-based cyber-market like those in shares and currencies.

Masters of the counting house like the lower dealing costs of an electronic market, which might link directly to their own computer systems. No matter if the intensity of human competition in the pit and "local" arbitrageurs offer clients keener trading prices.

The trigger, as futures industry leaders tried to tell us, is Europe's monetary union and Britain's absence from it. In theory, Liffe should continue to exploit its early lead, its English language and London's status as Europe's centre of Anglo-Saxon financial culture to

everything from personal pressure to hefty subsidy to repatriate the trade in German government bond futures, which had previously been lost to London.

This breakthrough is more important than it seems. The bond market will evolve into the market for euro-zone bonds. And the electronic trading system that allowed the DTB to overcome Liffe's advantages can be used to attempt the same trick in short-term euro interest rates and other euro-contracts, which Liffe has been at such pains to develop.

Matif, the perky French exchange, has just brought in a new, better electronic system, which quickly took over most of its trading.

For such a young, vibrant institution, Liffe became strangely conservative — easy enough when you are regularly hitting new trading records. Only last July, after what chairman Jack

Wigglesworth called "a long cool look at the business", Liffe's board concluded that its open outcry pit system was "the fairest and most efficient". This would remain "Liffe's predominant trading platform for the foreseeable future". So Spitalfields went ahead.

By July this year, virtually all these conclusions are likely to have been reversed. One great outcry stalwart was David Kyte, a big money local who claimed it was "the perfect form of competition". In March, however, Mr Kyte stormed out of a climactic Liffe meeting that opted for price cuts now and large-scale screen trading later, resigned from the board, said its leaders were too slow and signed up for DTB screens.

Tomorrow, Liffe members meet up to be blown by another wind of change. The board wants to cut its strength from 24 to 18 (clearly not the end of the matter) and replace

its retiring chairman, last of the founders, with a full-time, highlypaid one to confront the euro challenge. That would leave Liffe only two months to fill the post. Its chief executive Daniel Hodson, a former City finance director who has pushed forward much of the delayed reform, looks best placed to challenge, but alarming names such as Ken Clarke have surfaced.

A week today, Liffe's board is likely to propose ending the co-operative membership structure, which kept trading seats for shareholders. In a month's time, members will have a chance to vote on electronic trading before they surrender their democracy.

Change is gathering momentum. But Liffe's own state-of-the-art electronic trading system (a worry in itself) is not due to service the important contracts until the fourth quarter of 1999. That will give Matif and the DTB a clear run of nearly a year to try to steal a march in the real euro markets. Liffe will survive its crisis but a bit of luck and bulldog political support would help.

Crandall prepares to take off before BA deal wins approval

Jon Ashworth ponders the timing of a key departure at American Airlines



Stephen Wolf, left, and Bob Crandall have shown themselves to be among their sector's most formidable negotiators

Just before Easter in 1991, Bob Crandall, tough-talking chairman of American Airlines, strode into the arrivals hall at Heathrow airport and punched the air in triumph. A 25-year ambition had been realised, with the arrival of the first AA service at Europe's most important gateway airport. It was a moment to savour.

Seven years on, Crandall, 62, has caused surprise by saying he is to retire next month with the biggest prize of his career beyond his grasp. The much-vaunted global alliance with British Airways, unveiled with great fanfare in June 1996, remains enmeshed in red tape on both sides of the Atlantic. The latest guesswork suggests that Brussels is likely to give the deal the nod next month, with Washington to follow by the autumn. Either way, Crandall will not be around to see his dream fly.

Bob Ayling, the BA chief executive, paid homage yesterday, saying: "Bob Crandall is one of the greats of the post-war airline industry." Not only has he built AA into a formidable force in the fiercely competitive US domestic market, but has set the standard for much of the airline industry. He built the Sabre computer reservation systems into an industry benchmark. He invented frequent flyer programmes.

Crandall was the among the first to recognise the potential of UK regional airports, launching services to Manchester as long ago as 1986. He was flying to Birmingham and Glasgow long before he succeeded in breaking down the defences at Heathrow. With contemporaries such as Ste-

phen Wolf, chairman of United Airlines until 1994, and now chief executive of US Airways, Crandall cut a formidable figure in negotiations with unions, becoming much feared for his uncompromising approach.

Raised in Westerly, Rhode Island, Crandall joined AA in 1973 as senior vice-president finance, and took the main marketing role a year later. In 1980, he was made president of AMR Corporation, AA's parent company, and took on the additional roles of chairman and chief executive officer in 1985. His successor, Don Carty, was appointed AMR president in March 1995.

It remains surprising to see Crandall bow out at such a critical stage of the BA-American discussions. He has been leading presentations to regulators in Washington and Brussels, assisted by Carty. Some interpret the timing as meaning the deal is either

dead, or that the date on which Crandall has chosen to retire, May 20, is timed to coincide with a positive announcement from Brussels. This would allow him to step out on a high note.

May 20 is the date of AMR's annual shareholders' meeting. Brussels is expected to deliver its verdict on BA-American during May, so Crandall could yet have his moment. Karel van Miert, the European Competition Commissioner, is expected to rule that the deal can proceed with the proviso that BA gives up a substantial number of slots at Heathrow. The number could be as high as 353, but they would be directed in stages, softening the impact on BA.

The battleground then shifts to Washington, where US authorities are drafting a liberalised bilateral air services agreement between the UK and America. This will open the market to greater

competition — allowing a flood of new US entrants to Heathrow — and allow BA-American to clear the various regulatory hurdles.

Joel Klein, head of the anti-trust division at the US Department of Justice, is weighing up the likely impact of BA-American on transatlantic competition — a big sticking point with rivals such as Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic — but the final word on the deal rests with the Department of Transport. Klein is a figure of considerable influence, however, and brings significant weight to the deliberations. The Department of Transport has given interested parties until May 11 to submit comments. BA and American have a further month in which to reply further.

It was intended that BA-American would take to the air in April 1997, ushering in a new era of seamless travel. BA, which carries 38 million

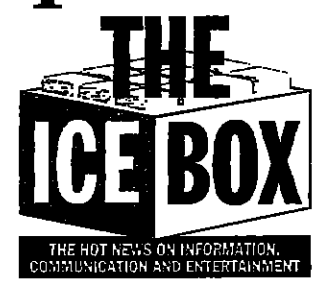
passengers a year, serving 82 destinations in 65 countries, would link with American's formidable US domestic network, radiating from hubs in Dallas/Fort Worth, Chicago and Miami. American and its domestic partner, American Eagle, serve 151 US cities.

Co-ordinating timetables would speed passengers through two or three changes of aircraft, pooling frequent flyer points along the way. Transatlantic cargo schedules would be synchronised. There would be no exchange of equity. American and BA would remain separate entities, retaining their own brands and identities.

Crandall said at the time: "This alliance links two airlines known for excellence and innovation in customer service. Customers will now have access to many more online destinations and an extraordinarily wide choice of routings and departure times, all at

Hearing scary monsters and super speech

Most film-goers will, at some point in their lives, ask themselves the following question: why, in nearly all sci-fi movies, can the terrifying purple monsters who inhabit alien solar systems billions of light years away from Earth, speak English?



It is a question that poses no problem for Endeavour Technologies, the tiny electronic translation company based in Surrey. Endeavour is developing software that instantly translates what you say into a language of your choice.

Endeavour says its products will soon allow you to have a telephone conversation or a video conference with a colleague in Tokyo, where everything you say comes out in fluent Japanese, and everything your colleague says comes out in fluent English.

At least, that is the theory. Peter Angell, managing director of Endeavour, admits that it will take up to 18 months for the project — called Tower of Babel — to become a commercial reality. Another catch is the cost, which is expected to be about £40 an hour. "It's not cheap, but then it's not overly expensive either," Mr Angell says. "An interpreter can cost up to £200 an hour, and they can be difficult to get hold of."

This week Endeavour received a vote of confidence from Lernout & Hauspie — the Belgian speech recognition and translation group — when it said it would buy a 10 per cent stake of the Oxford-based company.

At present, Endeavour specialises in developing speech recognition software that turns spoken words into written text. It also provides video-conferencing services and sells translation software. Mr Angell's plan is to merge all these services into one to create a seamless electronic translation process which will be considerably more convenient and cost-effective than a human translator.

As well as allowing you to speak in another language, Endeavour's software will also provide instant transcriptions of translated conversations. The company is also

working on products which will instantly translate shut documents online, or provide a delayed translation of large documents such as lengthy legal files.

Endeavour's plans will undoubtedly provoke fierce debate in the translating community. Mr Angell is aware that his products are never likely to be used to translate Jean-Paul Sartre. His focus is on improving your communication in emerging markets. "In China, in particular, people are rushing to get linguistic skills," he says. "But what they are putting in place is an IT infrastructure. We want to use that."

POSTAGE stamps that are downloaded from the Internet on to personal computers and produced by home printers could soon be in use in the US. A Californian company called E-Stamp has developed software that turns PCs into stamp machines. The only hardware needed is a small device that attaches to your printer and stores the value of the stamps bought.

A BRITISH software company that bravely claims to have developed a hacker-proof security system this week said it had proved its success. The company, called Janus Software, put up a £10,000 reward to hackers who could break into its software. Hacking is particularly worrying for large companies, which are at risk from industrial espionage, and governments. The number of cyber-attacks on the Pentagon is estimated at 250,000 a year. Janus's challenge, which ended at 8am yesterday, attracted 80,000 hackers from all over the world. None of them managed to break into the company's software.

CHRIS AYRES

Odour toilette

JUST AS Napoleon met his Waterloo — it looks like the More Group is about to meet its Superloo. The poster advertising firm is facing a French takeover after its bitter enemy, Decaux, trumped a £466 million agreed bid from Clear Channel of the US.

My man with the mop and the bucket of glue tells me that Roger Parry, More's chief executive, is less than happy about the prospect of working for Jean-François Decaux and has been suggesting that the odd local authority or two might kick up a fuss because of Decaux's potentially monopolistic position in poster

sites. Now it seems that M Decaux has launched an offensive *du charme*, offering a bus-paging system to London Transport (that's one of those signs that tells you when the next bus is coming) and possibly free superloos for other authorities. By this strategy, M Decaux hopes to avoid the bid being bogged down with competition issues.

Home truth

A MEMO goes round a Cardiff office from its facilities manager, Gary Brown. It bans the use of kettles in the building, saying: "Should the automatic cut-out on the kettle switch fail, then the smoke detectors will activate in the building and a major accident may be caused," adding that there would also be an issue about "who covers the cost of electricity even though it might be a small amount".

This may not seem to be much of an imposition but staff have been up in arms about the loss of their drinks-making facilities. The office is the information technology centre for Hyder — which supplies both electricity and water in Wales.



Bonacontention: Napoleon may be on More's mind



of the contents of the City offices of Yamaichi International, I note with interest lots 4259, 4260 and 4261. All are sets of golf clubs. The reason why a Japanese securities firm might have owned three sets of golf clubs might have a bearing on why it went bust.

What a sauce

I AM feeling sick, having just read a report entitled *The Foodservice Market for Sale of Plate Sauces 1998*. It reveals that in the UK's restaurants and cafes customers are their way through 11,169 tonnes of tomato ketchup, 9,802 tonnes of mayonnaise and an astonishing 6,074 tonnes of brown sauce each year. It adds: "Brown sauce has once again established itself as a Northern delicacy." Delicacy? I bow

to Foodservice Intelligence's knowledge of the market but they clearly have not sampled the product.

Life of Jobs

BITTER recriminations in the computer industry, where Steve Jobs of Apple has instituted a measure of stupidity called a "Glo-Meter" in honour of his predecessor, Gilbert Amelio. Further up the West Coast, there are worries about the strain being put on Bill Gates at Microsoft thanks to the coincidence of a US Justice Department investigation and a hate-mail campaign against king nerd. Writing in *Computer Weekly*, Gary Cooper, of Manchester University, advises Gates "to spend more time with his family and let others take the flak for a change". Something with which Steve Jobs would no doubt concur.

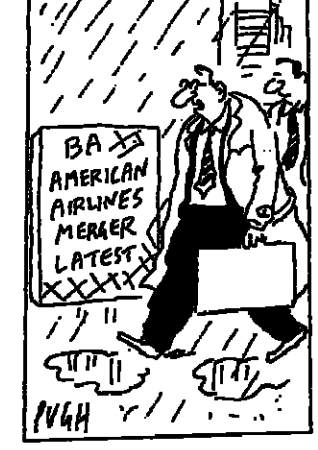
In the net

MY THANKS to Tom Smeaton, chairman of Leicester City, the stock market listed football club. The genial Mr Smeaton praised this newspaper's coverage of the company's results in the programme for the 3-3 draw against Southampton this week. Perusing this fine work — which I see won CMA Premiership Programme of the Year 1997 and FPB Programme of the Year 1998. I note an intriguing entry. The

fine Leicestershire firm of Caterfish — suppliers of fresh and frozen foods to the catering industry — is sponsoring one of Leicester City's players. His name? Steve Guppy.

CO-OPERATIVE Bank, the first financial institution to issue a bio-degradable credit card, should be a tad embarrassed by the publication of its first social and environmental report. In spite of Co-op Bank's green credentials, it has not recycled a single drinks can in the past year. "We spend two years investigating how to dispose of strip lighting, but miss the most obvious things," confessed a bank insider.

JASON NISSÉ



"I'm afraid it's still up in the air"

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Profits fall at Owens Corning

Owens Corning reported an 80 per cent drop in its first-quarter profit, but the results still beat Wall Street estimates and the company said restructuring plans were on track. The maker of glass fibre composites and building materials systems said net income was \$3 million, or 16 cents per diluted share, down from \$42 million, or 76 cents a share.

Before a series of exceptional, operating income was \$6 million, or 12 cents per diluted share, easily beating the consensus first call estimate of seven cents a share. Quarterly net sales rose 30 per cent to a record \$1.14 billion. Building materials pitched in \$856 million, an increase of 41 per cent from a year ago, helped by acquisitions in the exterior systems business and by strong housing starts.

Earnings flat at Coca-Cola

Coca-Cola suffered a 13 per cent fall in first quarter earnings to \$857 million (£509 million), hurt by the strong dollar. The world's largest maker of soft drinks said earnings fell despite a rise in sales to \$4.46 billion from \$4.14 billion, and a 14 per cent increase in the number of cases shipped worldwide. Basic earnings for the first quarter were 34 cents a share. In the first quarter of 1997, basic earnings were 39 cents, including an 8 cent after-tax gain from the sale of the company's interest in Coca-Cola & Schweppes Beverages.

Eyecare at the double

Eyecare Products, the spectacle framemaker that lost its chief executive and more than half its value in the past 18 months, yesterday reported 1997 pre-tax profits of £1 million, double the previous year. Earnings per share for the year to December 31 rose 67 per cent to 1p. However, rather than pay a final dividend, the board will seek to use the cash to grow the business. It will review dividend payments on receipt of the current half-year results.

Investcorp gets clearance for Watmoughs and BPC deals

BY MARTIN BARROW

INVESTCORP, the investment group based in Bahrain, was yesterday cleared to proceed with two major acquisitions that will significantly change the face of commercial printing in the UK.

Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, has decided not to refer to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission the takeover of Watmoughs and privately-owned British Printing Corporation (BPC), which will now

be merged into a single entity. Investcorp's bid for Watmoughs values it at £250 million, a significant premium to a rival £188 million hostile bid by Quebecor, of Canada. Although financial details of the acquisition of BPC have not been disclosed, the company is believed to be worth more than Watmoughs, lifting the value of the combined transaction to more than £600 million.

Both companies are to be merged, with Tony Rudston, chief executive of BPC, expect-

ed to run the combined business. Mr Rudston is also in line for a £500,000 bonus by way of compensation for abandoning plans to float BPC on the stock market.

Investcorp's plan has raised concern about the substantial market share the combined business will enjoy.

With annual sales of £560 million, the company will have more than 90 per cent of Britain's gravure capacity, necessary for long runs of quality printing. Among the magazines the combined com-

pany is contracted to print are *Cosmopolitan*, *Woman's Own*, *GQ*, *Hello* and *Country Life*. It will also have 50 per cent of the newspaper colour supplement market.

BPC, once owned by the late Robert Maxwell, has struggled since being acquired by a management team eight years ago, despite extensive cost-cutting. Mr Rudston is likely to implement another major round of cutbacks once the merger is completed, although details of likely closures and redundancies are sketchy. Investcorp has

set aside £100 million for investment in the business to help it to compete with more efficient European rivals.

Investcorp's other UK interests include Welcome Break, the motorway service station chain acquired for £476 million. Other investments held by Investcorp and its clients include stakes in Saks Fifth Avenue, the US retailer. Investcorp was also involved in the successful flotation of Gucci, the luxury brand.

Commentary, page 27



Seeing eye to eye: Kate Bleasdale, chief executive, at Sinclair Montrose's Medcentre, in Oxford Street

Sinclair to open 15 new surgeries

BY PAUL DURMAN

SINCLAIR MONTROSE, the fast-growing healthcare company, is planning to open another 15 Medcentres, the walk-in surgeries that were criticised recently by the Consumers' Association.

In the past year, it has added eight surgeries to the pilot, it opened at Victoria Station, in London, in 1996.

The Consumers' Association criticised record-keeping and the failure of some of the Medcentres to pass treatment details to patients' own doctors.

Sinclair Montrose reported a 158 per cent increase in sales, before acquisitions, to £15.7 million. As it had warned, pre-tax profits fell from £892,000 to £647,000.

The company, which is forecast to make nearly £3 million profit this year, is paying a dividend of 0.2p.

Tempus, page 28

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Micro shares rise as chief sets return date

SHARES in Micro Focus, the computer programming company, jumped 27½p to 537½p yesterday, after it said Martin Waters, its chief executive, would return to work in May after undergoing successful heart by-pass surgery. Mr Waters decided to have the operation at Stanford Memorial Hospital, California, late last week on the advice of his physician.

"I was fortunate to have surgery after the close of our fiscal year, and during a time when Micro Focus's business is proceeding well and momentum is strong," he said. "We remain confident that the company will achieve first quarter revenue and profit expectations as well as continued growth for the current year." The company, which is quoted on the London Stock Exchange and Nasdaq in the US, earned a net income of \$14.6 million (£8.8 million) last year, compared to a loss of \$14.7 million in 1996.

Wyevale directors sell

TWO directors of Wyevale Garden Centres have sold almost £1.5 million of shares in their company. Brian Evans, chairman, sold 150,000 shares in the company at 340p each earlier this week making £510,000. Peter Williamson, a director of Wyevale, sold 250,000 at 340p each, making £850,000. Wyevale shares remained unchanged at 346½p yesterday after the announcement was made. The shares peaked recently at 365p.

Compo buys 24 offices

COMPCO HOLDINGS, the property investment and development group, is to acquire the freehold of The Ivories, a former factory in Islington, North London, for £2.25 million. The Ivories was converted in 1986 into 24 office units and produces rental income of £263,000-a-year. The company said the acquisition will be paid for by the allotment of 965,665 new ordinary Compo shares, which have been conditionally placed at 233p per share.

Luxury cars boost Jacks

SHARES in William Jacks, the vehicle distributor, rose 9p to 75½p after the company revealed pre-tax profits rose from £1.2 million to £1.89 million in the year to the end of January. Earnings rose from 6.33p to 9.19p, and the total dividend increases from 2.25p to 3.5p after payment of a 2.25p final. Sales rose £22.4 million to £131.7 million, with luxury-market sales of BMW, Mercedes, Jaguar, Rover and Chrysler up 19 per cent against an industry average of 5 per cent.

City North plans float

CITY NORTH, the specialist residential property company, is planning a stock market flotation next month. The company, which invests in property located within a five-mile radius of Oxford Circus, in Central London, hopes to raise £10 million by placing new shares mainly with institutional investors. The company's property portfolio includes 300 flats and at the end of December was independently valued at about £36.5 million.

J&J's healthy earnings

JOHNSON & JOHNSON, the US healthcare products company, lifted first-quarter earnings 11 per cent to \$1 billion (£593.6 million), in line with expectations. Sales rose 1 per cent to \$5.8 billion. Total domestic sales were up 5 per cent, but a strong dollar affected international sales, down 3 per cent. Domestic pharmaceutical sales rose 22 per cent to \$1.2 billion, compared with \$960 million in the 1997 first quarter. World pharmaceutical sales were \$2.1 billion, against \$1.9 billion.

Skills shortage mars building recovery

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE construction industry is enjoying its best growth rate for nearly a decade but is running into serious skills shortages, the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors said yesterday.

The institute's survey of activity during the first quar-

ter of this year showed output increasing for the eighth successive quarter, while construction businesses remain confident that there will be a steady improvement in activity throughout the year ahead.

For the first time since 1989, workload increased in every region of the UK, with Millennium projects boosting the whole industry. The sharpest

rise in activity came in Wales and the South West, where output was 4.3 per cent higher than a year ago. Scotland and Northern Ireland also reported strong growth rates.

The institute gave warning, however, that many companies are facing serious skills shortages, with about 50 per cent of companies finding difficulties

recruiting skilled labour. The institute said that some of these problems result from the half a million redundancies in the building industry during the early 1990s, when many skilled labourers were forced to retrain for other jobs.

Growth was strongest in the private commercial sector, where activity increased 39 per cent last year. Industrial

property recorded a 13.1 per cent increase but the private housing, public housing and public works sectors made much smaller gains.

Richard Houghton, of the institute, said: "We are enjoying a period of stability in the industry. However, we are still at only 54 per cent of the 1988 level, which illustrates the severity of the recession."

Getting a grip on intangibles

Baruch Lev exploded accounting myths. Anthony Carey assesses the impact of his Leake lectures

Accounting research is irrelevant. It fails to address the real issues confronting the business community and adds little to policy-making in areas such as the setting of accounting standards. Professor Baruch Lev, the eminent American academic, exploded these myths in his recent P. D. Leake lectures on intangibles and in doing so challenged the existing way of doing things or, to be more precise, of not doing them. Intangibles, by their nature, are not seen, but Lev argued that far more should be heard of them, especially through their being capitalised in companies' balance sheets.

His research is driven by a concern that the impact of change in the business environment on companies' operations and well-being is not adequately captured by our present reporting system. He believes that financial statements have become much less useful to investors because expenditure on creating a new broad range of "soft" intangible assets, such as patents, brand names, software and customer bases, is generally written off as incurred, rather than capitalised and amortised over the asset's useful life.

Unravelling the effect of such an approach on corporate earnings and net assets is practically impossible. Clearly the high-technology, research-intensive industries such as pharmaceuticals, telecommunications and software development are affected more than others. The critical point, however, from a stock market valuation perspective is that the impact on a sector varies over time and between individual companies within it. When a firm or industry is young, a policy of capitalisation will tend to increase income in absolute terms and the return on equity as earnings will generally rise proportionately more than equity.

By contrast, later on in the life cycle, increasing amortisation charges from the capitalised assets will more than offset the earnings enhancement effect from capitalising new expenditure. Such that the policy of immediate write-off then has a flattening effect on earnings. Earnings trends are distorted and useful information is denied to investors.

Lev's research into the accounting treatment of software expenditure by more than 160 companies suggests users do find the information provided by assets being capitalised helpful even though significant subjectivity surrounds figures.

Professor Lev has also speculated on why analysts are not pressing for capitalisation. He mentions the traditional view that well-connected analysts can obtain information directly from management on products under development and, therefore, are not worried about the disclosure of headline information in the form of balance sheet carrying amounts. In addition, he suggests there may be anxieties about capitalisation as it makes it harder for them to



Anthony Carey says accounting for intangibles is a trade-off

predict earnings reliably since the amortisation charge is determined by fairly volatile factors such as the anticipated profit on new products.

Lev argues that standard-setters should remove one of the principal barriers to the capitalisation of intangibles by providing additional guidance on when there is the necessary certainty that the expected future benefits from intangibles will be realised. He goes on to suggest, more contentiously, that the fo-

cus should be on intangibles passing specified technical feasibility tests. If they do, they should be required to be capitalised, ending the present practice of leaving many off-balance sheet in the shadows, thereby avoiding the risk of an amortisation charge at some future date. Those with memories of Rolls-Royce's problems two decades ago may feel proper attention also needs to be paid to commercial feasibility as this may well be the stumbling block to a technically excellent product being taken into the marketplace.

It is not necessary to share Professor Lev's conclusions in full to welcome this important contribution to the debate on how we account for what are many businesses' most valuable corporate assets. Accounting for intangibles is about shades of grey, rather than black and white. It is about the trade-off between relevance and reliability and between what information should be provided on intangibles in the management discussion and analysis section of the accounts to enable users to understand them properly whilst at the same time recognising the commercial sensitivities of some disclosures. The real worry, as Professor Lev points out, is not that many directors are refusing to disclose relevant information about the management of their intangibles, but that they do not themselves possess it.

ONE of the many remarkable aspects of the accounting profession as the fastest growing profession of this century is the consistency of the firms that have taken it forward. If a traveller in H G Wells's Time Machine had moved a century on and wanted to set up a company to exploit the knowledge gained, the odds are the employee could go to exactly the same firm that he or she had known at the outset of the journey.

The top seven firms in 1886 included Deloitte, Coopers and Price Waterhouse. Equally consistent has been the ability of accountants to make large amounts of money out of their business. In 1898, the original Deloitte left £4.2 million in today's money. In 1917, the original Waterhouse left £5.1 million. In 1936, the original Peat left £21.8 million. There is no doubt that across the business world of the past hundred years it is the accountants who have been the most successful at growing their business and reaping its rewards. The above figures come from a fascinating book that is a definitive history of the accounting profession.

Called *The Priesthood of Industry*, it is by a trio of academics from Cardiff, including Dick Edwards, the leading accounting historian of his generation.

The book's aim is to show why accountants have risen to dominate the business world and does so with a persuasive thesis and an encyclopaedic collection of stories.

It differs from much of the current academic assumptions about the accounting world. As the introductory section shows, traditional academic thought from Karl Marx through to Hugh Willmott argues that the accountancy profession is a scandalous and corrupt cartel that holds the rest of the business world to ransom. This is the great conspiracy theory which provides critics like Austin Mitchell, Labour MP for Great Grimsby, with his ammunition.

The book takes a more rational line and suggests that far from being a conspiracy, the phenomenal growth of the profession has been a very traditional business story. "We take the view," say the authors "that the accountancy is an enthusiastic income maximiser, who pursues self-interest at the expense of other groups, and welcomes the enhanced social status conferred by society." They say the evidence demonstrates that the

The profession will always be supreme



ROBERT BRUCE

Knowledge is power

THE global accounting firms are always trumpeting their success at compiling huge databases of knowledge that they can then pass on, for a fee, to clients. But there are problems — people tend to hold onto what they know. Knowledge is still power, whatever information technologists may argue. So Arthur Andersen has devised a Finnish new device to get around this. The gizmo trawls data-

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

bases in secret and whenever it sees a bright idea removes it and shares it with the rest of the firm. So far this system of involuntary contribution to the knowledge databases operates in the tax departments. But it cannot be long before it takes over the world.

Property pile

IT IS NOT just the future Scottish Parliament that is think-

ing of abandoning its original buildings and heading for Edinburgh's regenerated wine-bar quarter in Leith Docks. The Scots ICA, resplendent in its headquarters building overlooking Queen's Street Gardens, has received an offer from a property developer who fancies turning the building, council chamber and all, into flats. Rumour has it that the council, which only last year was trying to be creative

with plummeting property valuations in the accounts, is tempted.

KPMG tartan

MEANWHILE, expect an outbreak of tartan memorabilia at KPMG. It appears that the firm has got together with the esteemed and long-established firm of Macnaughtons of Pilochry and has had its own tartan designed. It was a com-

ROBERT BRUCE

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Walkers

RIL 16 1998

فكرنا من الاصل

Shares close at day's worst

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES						
120.00	118.00	Asahi Breweries	119.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
100.00	98.00	Beck's Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
80.00	78.00	Carlsberg	79.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
60.00	58.00	Heineken	59.00	-1.00	4.0	9.0
40.00	38.00	Kaiser Brewery	39.00	-1.00	4.2	8.5
20.00	18.00	Miller Brewing	19.00	-1.00	4.5	8.0
10.00	8.00	Pilsener Beer	9.00	-1.00	4.8	7.5
5.00	4.00	Stout & Ale	4.50	-0.50	5.0	7.0
2.00	1.50	Wine & Spirits	1.80	-0.20	5.5	6.5
BANKS						
100.00	98.00	Bank of America	99.00	-1.00	4.0	10.0
80.00	78.00	Bank of England	79.00	-1.00	4.2	9.5
60.00	58.00	Bank of France	59.00	-1.00	4.5	9.0
40.00	38.00	Bank of Germany	39.00	-1.00	4.8	8.5
20.00	18.00	Bank of Italy	19.00	-1.00	5.0	8.0
10.00	8.00	Bank of Japan	9.00	-1.00	5.5	7.5
5.00	4.00	Bank of Spain	4.50	-0.50	6.0	7.0
2.00	1.50	Bank of Sweden	1.80	-0.20	6.5	6.5
BREWERIES, PUBS & REST						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
40.00	38.00	Heineken	39.00	-1.00	4.0	9.0
20.00	18.00	Kaiser Brewery	19.00	-1.00	4.2	8.5
10.00	8.00	Miller Brewing	9.00	-1.00	4.5	8.0
5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
40.00	38.00	Heineken	39.00	-1.00	4.0	9.0
20.00	18.00	Kaiser Brewery	19.00	-1.00	4.2	8.5
10.00	8.00	Miller Brewing	9.00	-1.00	4.5	8.0
5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
ENGINEERING VEHICLES						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
40.00	38.00	Heineken	39.00	-1.00	4.0	9.0
20.00	18.00	Kaiser Brewery	19.00	-1.00	4.2	8.5
10.00	8.00	Miller Brewing	9.00	-1.00	4.5	8.0
5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
FOOD MANUFACTURERS						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
40.00	38.00	Heineken	39.00	-1.00	4.0	9.0
20.00	18.00	Kaiser Brewery	19.00	-1.00	4.2	8.5
10.00	8.00	Miller Brewing	9.00	-1.00	4.5	8.0
5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
HEALTHCARE						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
40.00	38.00	Heineken	39.00	-1.00	4.0	9.0
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10.00	8.00	Miller Brewing	9.00	-1.00	4.5	8.0
5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
40.00	38.00	Heineken	39.00	-1.00	4.0	9.0
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10.00	8.00	Miller Brewing	9.00	-1.00	4.5	8.0
5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
INSURANCE						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
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5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
LEISURE & HOTELS						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
40.00	38.00	Heineken	39.00	-1.00	4.0	9.0
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5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
MEDIA						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
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5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
PHARMACEUTICALS						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
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5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
PRINTING & PAPER						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
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5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
PROPERTY						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
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5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
RETAILERS, FOOD						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
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5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
RETAILERS, GENERAL						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
40.00	38.00	Heineken	39.00	-1.00	4.0	9.0
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5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
SUPPORT SERVICES						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
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5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
TELECOMMUNICATIONS						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
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5.00	4.00	Pilsener Beer	4.50	-0.50	4.8	7.5
2.00	1.50	Stout & Ale	1.80	-0.20	5.0	7.0
TRANSPORT						
100.00	98.00	Asahi Breweries	99.00	-1.00	3.2	10.2
80.00	78.00	Beck's Breweries	79.00	-1.00	3.5	10.0
60.00	58.00	Carlsberg	59.00	-1.00	3.8	9.5
40.00	38.00	Heineken	39.00	-1.00	4.0	9.0
20.00	18.00	Kaiser Brewery	19.00	-		

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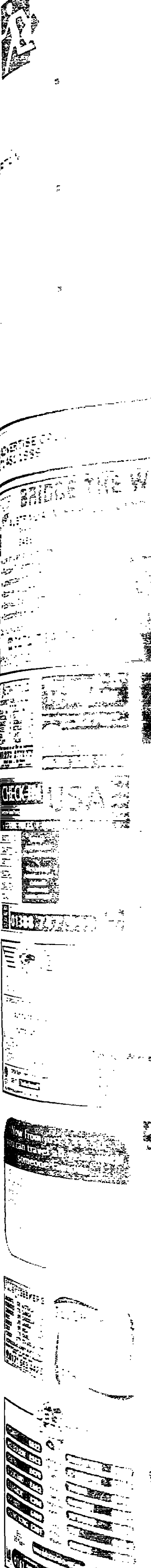
Table of unit trust prices for various funds, including names like 'GAMMA LIFE MGMT LTD' and 'GAMMA LIFE MGMT LTD'.

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Bargains of the week: from a villa in Gozo to a private estate near Barcelona or a cottage in Devon



A selection of last-minute holidays and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and farther afield, many at bargain prices.

BRITAIN

SHARE your weekend, not your bed is the message from The Strand Palace in London's West End to promote the end of single supplements for weekend visitors.

SATURDAY night theatre including Phantom of the Opera or Miss Saigon is available on May 2 with B&B at a four-star Heathrow hotel in a £15 Goldenrail package.

warm-blooded, is included in a six-day tour with Beavis Holidays which begins with a coach trip from the Gloucester area on April 24 and features nights in Edinburgh and Blairgowrie and three on a P&O ship. Priced from £358. Details: 01453 882297.

DEVON can be at its most spectacular in the spring, especially if it snows again, and Farm and Cottage Holidays has good deals from April 25 with a house sleeping four costing £151 and another sleeping eight for double that price.

MANCHESTER'S Malmaison hotel, created by converting a warehouse, opens today with a special offer of £99 a night for double rooms. Its rooms combine traditional extras (trouser presses) with more modern ones (CD players). Details: 0161-278 1000.

EUROSCOT Express has announced two bonuses for passengers using its daily Bournemouth to Glasgow flights: reduced fares for children and a £5 "travel anywhere in Scotland" Citylink coach ticket. Flights cost from £49 to £89 one-way. Details: 01202 364264.

EUROPE

LANZAROTE for a fortnight for £139 must be the bargain of the week and it's available from Co-op Travelcare for a First Choice self-catering holiday starting with a flight from Birmingham next Thursday. Details: 0541 500388.

TWO FLIGHTS for the price of one to Naples and Pisa are available from Citilina on May 1 and 2, so two can fly from Gatwick or Manchester from £194, returning within a week. Accommodation can be arranged from £24 a person a night. Details: 0181-686 5533.

TWO WEEKS for the price of one in a villa with pool on Gozo, the picturesque isle next to Malta, is on offer from Something Special for departures up to May 16. Prices now start from £319 a person based on four sharing and including flights and a week's car hire. Details: 01992 557755.

FUNGI the dolphin is waiting to greet you - and probably the occasional leprechaun - when you stay in Dingle on the west coast of Ireland, where Country Cottages in Ireland has properties

available from May 9. A week's holiday costs £90 a person including ferry crossing, based on five sharing. Details: 0990 851177.

DURAS, home of fine but little-known wine, a splendid leisure lake and quiet rolling countryside, is where Vacances en Campagne have a cottage unexpectedly available from May 23, the Bank Holiday week. It sleeps five and costs £830 including Channel crossings or local car hire. Details: 01798 869433.

A PRIVATE estate 50 miles from Barcelona and big enough for a party is available all summer from Vintage Travel. It accommodates 19 people and comes with outdoor pool, summerhouse and a cook. Price: £1,195 a week; £2,095 in high season. Details: 01954 261431.

HARDLY last-minute but the sooner you book First Choice ski holidays from next winter's newly launched brochure, the better the chances of a bargain. They include five-day self-catering breaks at Les Deux Alpes for £79 a person including return flights from Gatwick or for £49 if you drive. Details: 0870 7542754.



Earthwatch needs volunteers to help to protect sea turtles

LONG-HAUL

EARTHWATCH, the science and education charity, urgently needs extra volunteers to help on scientific and environmental projects and is subsidising the cost of some in May. Tony Dawe writes. The projects provide an opportunity to combine a holiday with working alongside leading scientists.

Choose from studying grizzly bears in Montana, protecting sea turtles in southern California or assisting Australia's marsupial rescue team. Volunteers pay from £675 for projects lasting from nine to 14 days; food and accommodation included but flights extra. Details: 01865 311600.

THE WEST COAST of America might be half a day away, but you can fly there midweek for £239 return plus tax until April 30 courtesy of Bon Voyage. Flights leave from Gatwick. Your stay must not be longer than 30 days and must include a Saturday night. Details: 0800 980789.

RECENT Kenya bargains have featured beach holidays, but now Somak Holidays is offering a five-night safari

from April 24 for £599 including scheduled flights and full board. The Masai Mara game reserve, Lake Naivasha and famous lodges including Treoys will be visited. Details: 0181-423 3000.

SAM LORDS CASTLE in Barbados is the destination for a week's all-inclusive holiday on offer from Advantage Travel Centres from £799. Fly from Gatwick on April 25. Details: 0870 9090070.

SPEND the next Bank Holiday diving in the Red Sea. Regal Holidays is offering a week's B&B in Hurghada from May 1 for £269 including flights. Diving prices start at £110. Details: 01353 778096.

All prices are per person and based on two sharing a room, unless otherwise stated.

WEEKEND TRAVEL See The Times on Saturday for more flight bargains and last-minute holidays

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-Geoff Andrew, TIME OUT

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FROM TOMORROW IN SELECTED CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Michael

Wright on how the composer

Carl Davis has breathed new life into a silent movie classic

Leaf through the pages of Carl Davis's massive score for Fred Niblo's 1925 silent epic *Ben Hur* and you soon see what a nerve-racking feat of concentration it must be to stand on the conductor's podium in front of the London Philharmonic Orchestra as the projector begins to whir. There are two-and-a-half hours of hurtling music here, and almost every bar is annotated, in the composer's neat handwriting, with exactly what is happening on screen at the time — be it a chariot wheel falling off, or Ben Hur falling asleep outside the palace gates. "It's a laborious process, but at least I know where I am," says Davis, 62, poring over his pages of tiny manuscript, emblazoned here and there with the blue chalk of his conductor's markings.

His job is to keep the orchestra not just in step with itself, but perfectly synchronised with the whirring, ancient celluloid flickering before his eyes at anything between 17 and 23 frames per second. "In the past, people invented techniques and special stopwatches to help to synchronise the music, but I don't like to be surrounded with too much machinery. If you've got an orchestra as good as the LPO sitting in front of you, conducting the film is a joy. If you've got a bunch of no-hopers, it's a struggle."

Until Davis triumphantly broke the mould with his score for Abel Gance's "lost" five-hour silent epic *Napoleon*, in 1980, if silent films were screened at all, they were — at best — accompanied by a pianist improvising romantic slush or ragtime. Many purists still feel that silent movies should be just that: silent. "But that was never the view of the people who made them," says Davis. "King Vidor said that for him music is 60 per cent of the effectiveness of a film. It was always meant to be there."

Davis, although best-known for his music for *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and the recent BBC *Pride and Prejudice*, has reinvented the silent movie score. "It is a dream project which has quite taken me over," he says. "I never want to use the film as a vehicle for self-expression. I just try to compose the 'right' music, rather than the 'best' music. So if *Ben Hur* is a romantic melodrama with a religious context, when you hear the music, you feel that is understood. The music is there to help the audience, bridging the gap between today's films and the old silent tradition of the Twenties."

Certainly, hearing the galloping, antiphonal thunder of Davis's two sets of timpani arranged on either side of the screen for the spectacular chariot race between Ben Hur, Messala and sundry cowboys and stuntmen, it is hard to imagine the thrilling set-piece without such sonic fireworks. This scene — like the film's sea-battle, in which the film's Spanish extras were equipped with sharpened swords and



"If you've got an orchestra as good as the LPO sitting in front of you," says Carl Davis, "conducting the film is a joy"

Play it again, Carl, with music

secretly divided into Fascist and Socialist factions before the cameras began to roll — became part of the mythology of *Ben Hur*, after director Niblo offered a winner's purse of \$1,000 to stir some excitement among the drivers. All

Hollywood crowded onto the set and placed bets. And what they (and Niblo's 42 cameras) caught was a real race, culminating in a hideous, unscripted pile-up at its climax.

"Even though they claimed no one was injured, you sim-

ply couldn't do those things without someone getting badly hurt," says Davis. And that includes the musicians, it seems. "For the orchestra players, the race must be a killer," says Davis. "In its continuous intensity, especially for the

brass, it's one of the most demanding things ever."

Appropriately for a score which so challenges both conductor and musicians — and for a project which seeks to attract new audiences to orchestral music — one of Davis's most memorable performances of *Ben Hur* took place at a Roman amphitheatre-cum-bullring near Montpelier.

"The comic thing was that my dressing-room was the bullfighter's dressing-room," says Davis with a twinkle. "There was a shrine in the corner for saying your prayers before going to face the bull. And the staff of the place would stand behind me just before I made my entrance to the arena, and they actually pushed me out."

Considering what the conductor's job entails — stopping just short of bloodshed — one can see why they thought this might be necessary.

● Carl Davis conducts the LPO in a screening of *Ben Hur* at the Festival Hall (0171-960 4242) on Saturday at 7.30pm



Heading for disaster: filming the legendary chariot race from the 1925 *Ben Hur*

Too much funny business

THE GAME

PolyGram, 15, 1997
THE director of *Seven*, David Fincher, returns with another audacious thriller. Michael Douglas stars as a successful businessman whose ordered life unravels after his younger brother (Sean Penn) gives him a gift certificate for a mysterious outfit called Consumer Recreation Services. Fincher and company revel in the jeopardy situations contrived by the scenario, though you have to be a lover of extremely elaborate practical jokes to get two hours' worth of fun from the experience. A rental release.

NIGHT AND FOG

Notreaux Pictures, 15, 1955
NOW enjoying a mellow old age, Alain Resnais makes films designed as consciously artificial entertainments. It was not always so: this famous half-hour documentary, made four years before his first feature, still jolts and disturbs with its collage of archive shots and photos concerning Nazi concentration camps and the extermination of Jews. Latrines. A mound of women's hair. Crude drawings made on human skin. Skeletal bodies bulldozed into a pit. Resnais's own camera prowls around the surviving sites, desolate and eerie in colour, while Hanns Eisler's soundtrack

NEW ON VIDEO

music supplies an appropriate note of mournful anguish. A pocket masterpiece.

FREE WILLY 3: THE RESCUE

Warner, U, 1997
THESE further adventures of Willy the killer whale are much stronger than expected. A good New Zealand direc-

tor, Sam Pillsbury, helps: he gives the action scenes extra bite. And the script does its bit by avoiding easy stereotypes in the clash between environmentalists and whale hunters. There is no faceless villain to hiss; instead we get a whale hunter who is following the family tradition, much to his son's displea-

sure. Willy himself is not always the genuine article: sometimes he looks like a giant bath toy. But no matter: the film works. Available to rent.

KEEP THE ASPIDISTRA FLYING

First Independent, PG, 1997
THE British period movie

machine rolls out another smooth-looking product with this adaptation of George Orwell's faintly autobiographical novel of the 1930s. Richard E. Grant is the aspiring poet and advertising copywriter, who tries to embrace poverty and his art, and pooh-poos middle-class respectability (symbolised by the aspidistra, once a revered potted plant in genteel homes). Helena Bonham Carter, inevitably, plays the patient girlfriend struggling to keep their relationship alive. It's gently engaging, though the social attitudes transported from the novel now seem positively archaic. A rental release.

FATHER'S DAY

Warner, 12, 1997
THERE are two major stars on view. Robin Williams and Billy Crystal, and whatever laughs the film manages depend upon their personalities. The plot itself produces little: what can you expect with an American remake of a French comedy about two men belatedly told by their ex-lover that they have fathered a teenage son? Nastassja Kinski, an unappealing kid, and a finale bogged down in unearned sentiment complete the bill of fare. Available to rent.



Michael Douglas tries to play up and play *The Game*. David Fincher's thriller

GEOFF BROWN

هكذا من الاصل

NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown on Clint Eastwood's excellent character study, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*

When it's sleepy crime down South

Savannah, Georgia. Southern courtesy is everywhere, like the sun-dappled trees in the parks and squares and the foliage creeping round the great houses. Eccentricity is rife too. One man takes an invisible dog for his regular morning walk. Another goes about with a vial of poison and a collection of flies buzzing round his head. Along with the smiles and the courtly gestures, men and women routinely carry loaded guns.

"This place is like *Gone With the Wind* on mescaline," explains John Cusack, cast as the visiting New York journalist in *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. The description misleads, for there is nothing lurid, in colouring or style, about Clint Eastwood's new film, adapted from John Berendt's bestselling non-fiction book. Eastwood, who directs but does not act, takes his time telling the tale, savouring the setting, strolling along with his cast. If you judge this film as a real-life murder mystery — and a shooting and court trial lie at the plot's heart — then the dawdling pace is infuriating, sapping tension right and left. But if you accept *Midnight* as a character study, then Eastwood's wanderings seem the only way to proceed.

Cusack's character, John Kelso — a surrogate figure for Berendt himself — is not the main attraction. He is the observer on the fringe, amused and appalled by the Savannah way of doing things. Instead, all eyes are on the excellent Kevin Spacey, from the electric moment when he turns around to reveal his face, smooth, sophisticated and smug, a jaunty moustache housed on his upper lip. This is Jim Williams, an antiques dealer grown wealthy off Savannah's historic houses. He lives in one himself, where he wines and dines the Savannah elite at elaborate Christmas parties. Kelso comes to cover one for *Town and Country* magazine; a routine assignment until Williams ends the evening by shooting his violent, demanding houseboy and lover, played by Jude Law.

Williams is arrested, denied bail and sent to the cells. A trial looms, and a gay lifestyle risks exposure. But the film forgoes any edge-of-the-seat courtroom drama. Instead, personalities loom, like the breezy defence attorney played by Jack Thompson, or the drag artist The Lady Chablis, a real participant in the Williams case, triumphantly cast as herself. There is also Irma P. Hall's Minerva, a woodoo priestess who gives regular performances in a cemetery — at midnight, in fact, in the garden of good and evil.

If Eastwood were not such an astute observer of society's renegades, we might tire of this parade of oddballs. But he directs his cast so carefully, and lets them savour all the ironies and nonchalant wit in John Lee Hancock's script adaptation. Occasionally his subtlety lets the film down: Kelso's relationship with shop girl Mandy (played by Eastwood's daughter, Alison) is pushed so far back as to be hardly visible. Most of the time, though, the bull's-eye is hit. Faced with this richly rewarding human comedy, do you really want an average murder mystery? Do you even want *Gone With the Wind* on mescaline?

"I'm spiritually bankrupt. I'm empty. I've squandered everything on shrinks, lawyers and whores. I've just now grown up." Words like these tumble from Woody Allen's mouth in the fascinating and unsettling *Deconstructing Harry*. Other words, unusual



The Lady Chablis, the drag artist who was involved in the real-life events on which *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* is based, plays herself in a scene with John Cusack

Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil

Warner West End
15, 155 mins
Atmospheric character study from Clint Eastwood

Deconstructing Harry

Carzon West End
18, 98 mins
Woody Allen gets prickly

Great Expectations

Empire, 15, 112 mins
Small results

Gummo

Metro, 18, 84 mins
Indulgent portrait of idle youth

Hard Rain

Warner West End
15, 96 mins
Silly, water-logged thriller

ly for Allen, start with the letters f and c. At times this is a coarse film. It is always, in various ways, an explicit one, dragging out into the daylight the darker side of Allen's screen identity.

For Harry Block, the writer he plays, is no great charmer.

He chases women the way others chase taxis and treads hard on people's feelings. He wears a torn vest and discusses penis sizes with his young son. Utterly self-obsessed, he grinds up every tortured relationship, with family, wives, friends and in-laws, into food for his fiction. The film follows suit, sprinkling scenes of Block's current life with dreams of hell, flashback memories and staged recreations from his writings.

This piecemeal structure gives Allen ample room to display his usual elite cast. People like Judy Davis, Billy Crystal, Kirstie Alley, Robin Williams, Demi Moore and Richard Benjamin come and go in small, telling roles, haranguing, exploding or acting bemused. The jigsaw puzzle feel, coupled with the nervous editing, serves another purpose: it jacks up the tension. This is definitely a film with the fidgets.

We meet Block at a point of crisis. He cannot write. Personal demons attack him. More than usually neurotic, he journeys upstate by car to receive an honorary award from his old university, just like the elderly professor in Ingmar Bergman's *Wild Strawberries*, a film Allen reveres. For company Harry has an exuberant black hooker in tight pink leather (Hazel Goodman), a withdrawn male friend (Bob Balaban) and his own young son, kidnapped from under his divorced wife's nose.

In earlier days, Allen might well have made more of the Bergman echoes and used the journey as the clear focal point, rather than a hook for discursive scenes. One can also imagine a funnier treatment of the same material, less aware of anguish and pain. But Allen is not interested in making a blithe entertainment; he wants to needle, confront and probe, if not his private soul, then at least the version he shows to the public. So how funny is this movie? Often very, sometimes moderately although, as always, it helps if you feel at home in Allen's small and particular universe. We are in New York City, of course, among well-off, heterosexual professionals. Jews are abundant and a prime source for Allen's self-mockery. But no gays. No blacks, beyond the hooker. This is the universe of a worried, sex-obsessed, middle-aged white male.

Even if this world view

pleases, *Deconstructing Harry* can still make you pause before laughing. Sometimes the jokes seem too random, or juvenile. Others leave you feeling uncomfortable, as when Harry discusses the value of whores. You don't have to discuss Proust or films with them, he says; you just do it and go home. Who exactly is talking here — Block, or his creator? Sometimes it is hard to tell.

But in one key respect, Allen is nothing like Harry. Allen suffers from no creative block: he has released a film almost every year since 1969, and makes comic dramas of his life in a way no other director attempts. *Deconstructing Harry* will not be among his most popular films, but it is wonderfully prickly, dangerously funny at times, and shows Allen stretching muscles we didn't know he had.

"I'm not going to tell it the way it happened," Ethan Hawke tells us on the soundtrack of *Great Expectations*. "I'm going to tell it the way I remember it." Useful words to bear in mind as we struggle through a film that finds a place for Florida fauna, New York subway trains, the music of Iggy Pop and the Grateful Dead, and fashions by Donna Karan. Alfonso Cuarón, the director, may have hit the heights with *A Little Princess*, another renovation of a classic book, but his pictorial skills go to waste in this futile updating of Dickens.

Hawke assumes the adult form of the Pip equivalent, Finnegan Bell, a Florida urchin with a flair for painting and a passion for Estella, haughty niece of Ms Dinsmoor (Miss Havisham to you), who flounces around her decaying house looking just like Anne Bancroft playing Norma Desmond. And indeed it is Bancroft. The magnanimity of an unknown patron sends Hawke off to the Big Apple, where Gwyneth Paltrow (the adult Estella) dangles her beauty before him. Robert De Niro wanders in and out as the convict figure, but to little good effect. It must have been tempting to recast Dickens for the 1990s, especially after the Bard scored such a hit with teenage crowds in *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*. But that film had zest, plus Leonardo DiCaprio. This one, alas, has neither. *Gummo* has zest, of a

reckless sort. This is the vastly uneven work of Harmony Korine, the screenwriter when still a skateboarding teenager of Larry Clark's controversial *Kids*. Now 23, Korine has turned director, and produced a furious collage of idle lives in Middle America. The lead youths search for stray cats to drown and sell; two girls try to enlarge their nipples; a boy hangs around town wearing pink rabbit ears; rednecks

gather to brawl and break furniture. Welcome to life in Xenia, Ohio. Korine clearly feels sympathy for the young and bored in the Midwest wasteland: part of his childhood was spent in Nashville, where the film was shot, using a mix of locals and professionals. Not that he aims at documentary realism. Narrative structure is abandoned. Images hunch between film and videotape; influences

range from the improvised outpourings of John Cassavetes to the fantasy splurges of Fellini. "I care about making new kinds of dramas, new ways to watch films," Korine says. It sounds good, although too often Korine's search for a new cinema language becomes an excuse for dishevelled, indulgent film-making. And what does *Hard Rain* offer? Rain, rain and more rain, sloshing against the

characters as they bob up and down in the course of a night spent in a flooding Ohio River. A downpour of clichés is evident too, as Christian Slater plays cat and mouse with the local sheriff, a bunch of crooks and \$3 million. Graham Yost, writer of *Speed*, dreamt this up for director Michael Salomon, but it's hard to deliver high-velocity thrills when darkness rules, water sloshes and characters squelch.

SNAP VERDICT

Poor Dickens

Every week, young film fans discuss some of the latest releases...

■ GREAT EXPECTATIONS
Leslie Isaiah Thomas, 20: Perhaps with a better leading man something might have been salvaged. Unfortunately, Ethan Hawke's screen presence is wanting.
Dom Young, 19: Gwyneth Paltrow is as luminous as ever, but even she cannot save this poor adaptation.
Emma Rolph, 19: Great novels do not always make great movies. This modern-day version of *Great Expectations* left me cold. Where was the passion?
Laura Brook, 19: Robert De Niro delivers a heavily flawed performance in this lacklustre movie. Very poor.

■ DECONSTRUCTING HARRY
Leslie: At times this great comedy is teasingly autobiographical. Woody Allen at his best.
Dom: Enormous fun. The A-list cast excels — even Demi Moore.
Emma: Allen gives us yet another highly inventive comedy. A classic.
Laura: Comedies don't come much better than this.

■ HARD RAIN
Leslie: A film with a confused identity: part comedy, part thriller, part moral tale. Unfortunately, it is not particularly successful in any category.
Dom: The comedy and gore make for an odd mix. Average.
Emma: A paint-by-numbers action movie that is poor entertainment.
Laura: Rubbish.

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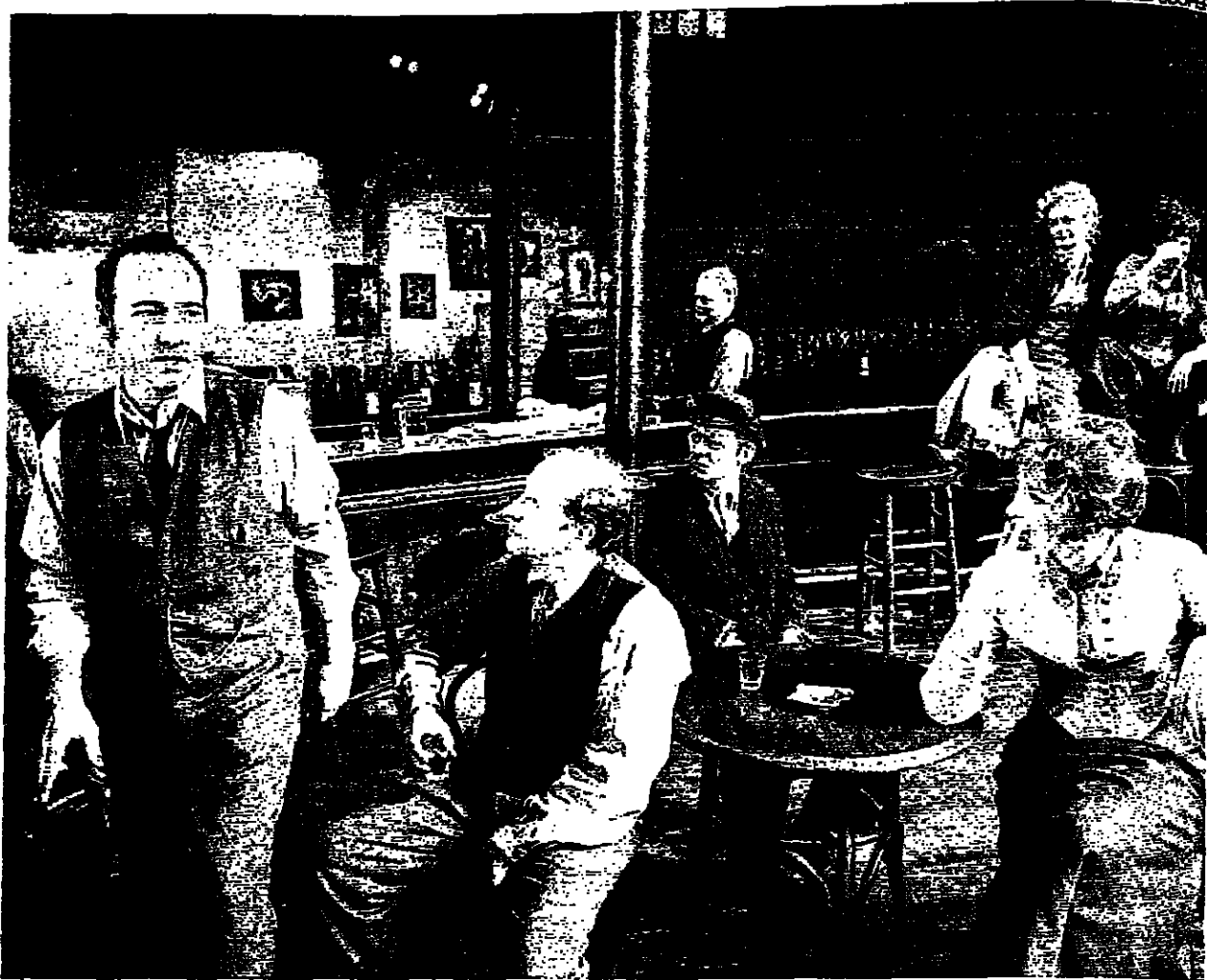
KIDS

RITZY CINEMA
METRO

Monster but no elephant

No waste of Spacey

When an assistant director suggested cuts in this bleak, weird, massive, remarkable play, pointing out that the idea that mankind was wedded to its "pipe-dreams" was repeated 18 times. Eugene O'Neill made a robust reply: he meant it to be repeated 18 times. And the curious thing is that, although 18 is actually an underestimate, and although *Iceman* runs well over four hours, a strong revival leaves one sitting far more with the dramatist than with the mistrustful factotum. Certainly, Howard Davies's production sent me out convinced that, in defiance of the rules, persistence had produced power and relentlessness become art.



The magnetic Kevin Spacey (far left) as the mesmeric suppersalesman Hickey, holding forth to his flock of bar-room losers

Let us thank both the intensity of O'Neill's writing and the sharpness of a company illumined by what's not, emphatically not, a piece of opportunistic casting. Kevin Spacey is mesmeric as Hickey, the suppersalesman who saunters into a shabby Bowery saloon packed with British actors at their best: Clarke Peters and Rupert Graves, Patrick Godfrey, Nicholas Day and Mark Strong. Tim Pigott-Smith as a one-time anarchist whose anguished pretence is that he no longer cares for others, Ian Bartholomew as the alcoholic journalist Jimmy Tomorrow, James Hazeldine looking like a grizzled blend of hedgehog and Teddy Roosevelt as the sympathetic bar-owner, Harry Hope.

The very names emphasise how much the assembled bums, slumped in vests and braces on their spindly chairs, rely on fantasies of the future, nostalgic reinventions of the past and the other ontological alibis O'Neill sums up as "pipe-dreams". Such is the magnetism of illusion that even the prostitutes insist on calling themselves "tarts", not "whores". Then in saunters Spacey's Hickey, his sample-cased with promises of happiness. He will relieve those of those lingering pretences that he thinks are rotting their minds more cruelly than Hope's brackish whiskey. He will give them reality, and reality will bring them peace.

Spacey makes this preposterous sales pitch surprisingly plausible. You can imagine him on the doorstep, effectively arguing the merits of anything from encyclopedias to snake-oil to belief systems. You readily believe he is a minister's son, for he has smoothly refined his evangelic skills to cable-channel standards. He would run a pretty good encounter group too. He knows when to eyeball people and when to touch them. He radiates such earnest assurance and smiling self-belief that poor Tomorrow ends up seeing for himself that he will never get back his job. Hope that he cannot even cross the road, and the others that the future offers nothing

but more liver spots before their rheumy eyes. Do they think him? Hardly. Do they find happiness? Only when Hickey is untrussed as a pipe-dreamer himself. Since you may not know the play, and should certainly discover it, I won't reveal more than that Hickey is himself an alcoholic who, until the liberation he now preaches, has been tormented by the love of a forgiving wife. But I can say that Spacey gives you not only the pain of guilt but something more unusual and important. Towards the end there is a long, long silence, not de-

LONDON
JUPITER ORCHESTRA: A series of three concerts featuring the music of Johann Nepomuk Hummel provides the research pad for this brassy, distinct chamber group whose specialty is programming which blends new commissions with rarely heard pieces from the early 20th-century repertoire and works by the classical masters. Tonight's opener includes pieces by Dana Bumell, Mozart and Gregory Rose. The latter also conducts St John's, Smith Square, SW1 (0171-222 1061). Tonight, 7.30pm.

THE REAL INSPECTOR HOUND/BLACK COMEDY: Inspired coupling of Stoppard's parody whodunnit and Shaffer's light-for-dark farce. Greg Doran's excellent cast includes Desmond Barft, David Tennant, Sara Crowe and Nicola McFaul. Comedy Theatre, Panton Street, SW1 (0171-369 1731). Preview on tonight, 7.30pm. Opens April 22, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm.

SIBLING SUPPORT: The actor Alexander Choushkov, winner of multiple music awards, is accompanied by his penpal sister Anna in a programme featuring works by Stravinsky, Debussy, Shostakovich and Prokofiev. Wigmore Hall, Wigmore Street, W1 (0171-935 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm (S).

SUSANNA: As part of the 21st London Handel Festival, Handel's oratorio traces the London Handel Orchestra and Choir in a performance of the Baroque composer's magnificent oratorio. A distinguished cast of singers is headed by Emma Kirkby in the title role, with James Bowman as her husband. St George's Church, Hanover Sq, W1 (0181-336 0990). Tonight, 7pm.

OUR LADY OF SLAGO: In Sebastian Barry's new play Sinead Cusack, Nigel Terry and Catherine Cusack play members of a dysfunctional family. Max Stafford-Clark directs for Out In Court National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1.

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hergula

St George's Church, Hanover Sq, W1 (0181-336 0990) Tonight, 7pm.

OUR LADY OF SLAGO: In Sebastian Barry's new play Sinead Cusack, Nigel Terry and Catherine Cusack play members of a dysfunctional family. Max Stafford-Clark directs for Out In Court National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jenny Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

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■ DANCE OF DEATH Simonberg's grandly funny two-play analysis of a marriage founded on the lust for dominance. Carlo Celleri resists the play in Dorset, Nicholas Kent directs. The Play, 100 Grafton Street, London, W1 (0171-328 1000). Tue-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 7.30pm and Sun, 4pm and 7.30pm. Until April 25 (S).

■ GIVE ME YOUR ANSWER, DO! Brian Friel's play, set among a literary set in Co. Donegal, with a star cast of Geraldine James and Neil Patrick Harris. Lyric Theatre, 100 Grafton Street, London, W1 (0171-328 1000). Tue-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 7.30pm and Sun, 4pm and 7.30pm. Until April 25 (S).

■ THE JUDAS KISS Liam Neeson was the London stage debut playing Carlo Celleri, with Tom Hollander as Boole, in David Hare's new drama exploring love and betrayal. Richard Eyre directs an Almeida production here.

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where shown) elsewhere in the country

ABC Tottenham Court Road (0171-339 6148) Greenwich (0181-335 3000). **Odessa: Camden Town (0181-315 4259)** Kensington (0181-315 4259). **Marble Arch (0181-315 4216)** West End (0181-315 4220). **West End (0171-370 2036)** Trocadero (0181-370 2036).

■ GATTACA (15) Cool and chic sci-fi movie about genetic engineering, with Ethan Hawke, Uma Thurman and Jude Law. Directed: Andrew Niccol. (0181-370 2036) (0181-370 2036).

KUNDTUN (12) Martin Scorsese's strikingly visual and multi-layered early life of the Dalai Lama, with a cast of Tibetan actors. Chelsea (0171-351 3743). Clapham Picture House (0171-493 3232).

Never having read George Eliot's novel, I assumed I knew the story. It was the one where a miser's heart is melted by the arrival of a little child. I once saw an illustration, something like the cover of the programme to this adaptation by Geoffrey Beavers, where a pinched old man tenderly holds a youngster in his arms.

This production, which Beavers is also the director, makes me aware how much I have missed by allowing the hero's dismal name to put me off. If the version is faithful to the book, then Silas was never a miser in the Scrooge sense at all, although his redemption also begins with a vision at Christmas. Eliot, however, who at an early age decided Christianity was not for her, carefully constructs her plot so that it is a human love that heals. There is still

talk of Providence, and more coincidences occur than in real life, but the image of a golden-haired child — after little Eppie has tottered through the snow, away from her mother's dead body and into Silas's life — come to replace the stolen golden guineas works so powerfully that it is a pleasure to suspend disbelief.

Touched by Eppie and several other dolls

After the opening scenes, the milk of human kindness is liberally on tap, expressed in Lorna Marshall's design by dressing almost everyone in mellow browns and creams. The stage seldom contains more furniture than the bench for Patrick Drury — giving the bemused Silas a gentle, honest dignity — to sit on and mime his weeping.

Beavers could, however, have done more to clarify who's who. The family secrets simmering in the Red House just our concentration to the limit — not just regarding the doings of the angry

squire and his two sons, feckless Geoffrey and the blackmailing Dunsen, but also in deciding which are the significant details. We must look to the novel, no doubt, to explain such puzzles as why Geoffrey's future wife insists that she and her uglier elder sister go to the ball wearing similar accessories.

All seven members of the cast have often acted in this intimate theatre-in-the-round. Here is Timothy Watson as the honest Aaron and manipulating the doll representing Aaron as a child. And here is Leah Fletcher, playing Eppie and manipulating the Eppie doll. Frank Moore plays several crusty worthies, Brian Hickey is Geoffrey as well as his horse. All serve the story well and the dolls are exquisite.

NEW RELEASES
DIFFERENT FOR GIRLS (15) Macho cop/rock star film: himself drawn to an old school trend, now a transsexual. Moderately sensitive British comedy, with Steve Mackintosh and Rupert Graves. Director: Richard Sneyd. Virgin. Chelsea (0171-352 5098). Haymarket (0171-439 1527).

JUNE NAIL (18) Swinging grungy Norwegian black comedy about a downcast postman sucked into petty crime. A striking debut for director Pål Sverre Hagen. Virgin. Chelsea (0171-352 5098). Haymarket (0171-439 1527).

THE TWILIGHT OF THE ICE NYMPHS Unrequited love in a fantasy land where the sun never sets. Arcane economy. With Catherine McCormack, Guy Madsen, with Shelley Duvall, Pascale Bussières and Nigel Whitmey. UFA (0171-930 3677).

CURRENT
AS GOOD AS IT GETS (15) Cross-couple-comedy Jack Nicholson tries to become a better person. Comedy-crossover, manipulative comedy-drama, directed by Jay Roach. Books, James, for sale at Odeon. With Helen Hunt and Greg Kinnear.

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Monsters but no elephants

OPERA: Two new productions headed for London are pushing back the creative frontiers. Mike Bradley reports on a futuristic *Aida* and a Glass premiere

These are bold, exciting times in the world of staged opera and this week and next witness the openings of two very different, innovative productions — one a gigantic classical spectacular in London, the other a "digital" opera in three dimensions performed in Los Angeles. Both can be said to represent significant new departures in terms of presentation. Both employ ingenious techniques of light projection to achieve grand illusions. But oddly, they couldn't be less similar if they tried.

Here in London, the circus comes to town from April 23-25, courtesy of Harvey Goldsmith, who is bringing the Operama production of Verdi's *Aida* masterminded by maestro Giuseppe Raffa to Earls Court. For three nights it will fill the arena with its expansive, 96ft-tall tiered stage peopled by an extensive international cast swelled by more than 500 locally recruited extras. Metaphorically, unlike one or two of the more extravagant *Aidas* of recent years, this particular "circus" is bereft of royal retinues, bearded elephants, stubborn domedomedaries and plumed horses pirading unfortunately across the stage.

That is not to say, however, that this manifestation is any less splendid than its predecessors, as I discovered recently when I visited it in its latest port of call: Zurich's Hallenstation. On close inspection behind the scenes I was surprised to find that one of the grandest, most futuristic stagings I have ever seen possessed virtually no set to speak of. Instead there was a high stage comprising four tiers linked with simple staircases, the whole painted with special white paint

formulated to facilitate the optimum projection of photographic images. Vast panoramas of ancient Egyptian artefacts gave way in a split second to curtains of hieroglyphs, a giant sphinx, a pyramid, draping the already lavishly costumed cast accordingly and adding a cinematic dimension.

Another important aspect of this production is the state-of-the-art sound technology which cleverly manages to eliminate delay, so often such a bugbear in large auditoriums. For the rendition of Verdi's tale of treason and tragic love coming to London, Raffa will conduct the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra, in a barely visible pit beneath the stage, and the principals will be Wilhelmina Fernandez and Dennis O'Neill, alternating with Anna Valderrama and Piero Giuliaci in the roles of *Aida* and *Radames*.

With seat prices ranging from £22.50 to £36, it is clear that this is an unashamed attempt to provide opera for the masses. Snobs may sneer at the prospect of what they suppose to be a vulgar interpretation peppered with technological jiggery-pokery, but, bar one or two slightly florid scenes before the interval, those prepared to give the evening a chance will be rewarded by fine operatic performances simply enhanced by appropriate special effects.

The effects employed at UCLA's Royce Hall in *Monsters of Grace*, the latest collaboration by the composer Philip Glass and the director/designer Robert Wilson, are very special indeed. This "digital opera" received its world premiere there yesterday and is scheduled to come to the Barbican from May 19-23 as part of a year-



The awesome 96ft set of *Aida* at Earls Court: if the purists sneer and stay away, they will miss some fine operatic performances enhanced by stunning special effects

long European and North American tour. The libretto is based on the "ecstatic" love poetry of the 13th-century Persian Sufi mystic Jalaluddin Rumi, credited rather over-enthusiastically in the programme as "the original whirling dervish". The work focuses on the theme of the heart, and consists of 12 poems and 13 principal visual images, the idea being that the coolness of the image is married with the fire of poetry.

In conversation last week at his elegant, if predictably spartan, home on Manhattan's Lower East Side, Glass explained that the

peculiarly evocative title stems from the time when Wilson was doing a one-man *Hamlet* and there was a line in the play that he could never get right. "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!" always came out as "monsters of grace". Years later, when he told Glass about this, the thought occurred to the composer that most oriental love poetry divided into either the devotional or the romantic dedicated either to a deity or to a beloved. "Human love is a doorway into the divine. Thus grace refers to a divine activity which is given as a gift to human beings. A state of grace has

to come from a divine source and it elevates you out of the human. The monsters are us, because we are imperfect, the 'defective souls' that Aquinas refers to. The piece is about the transformation of the ordinary world through divine love."

Certainly *Monsters* is a work which, in execution if not in scale, goes way beyond even *Einstein on the Beach*, the pair's last radical collaboration. Synthesians — three-dimensional computer-generated images of the kind first seen in the film *Jurassic Park* — are projected on to a 40ft by 20ft screen

in 70mm stereoscopic film format. To the accompaniment of a score performed by the composer and the Philip Glass Ensemble with vocal soloists. The audience views the proceedings through blue cardboard spectacles with tinted blue lenses, quite unlike the primitive red and green affairs from the days of *The Creature From the Black Lagoon*.

The work is intended to change the way an audience experiences live performance, immersing spectators in a multisensory experience rooted in the "enigmatic interplay of objects, light and sound". "We're

not giving you puzzles to solve," says Wilson. "only pictures to hear." "You know, we talk about pieces as having form and content and all those issues," adds Glass. "but I think what's interesting about *Monsters of Grace* is that we're actually talking about the very medium that the piece exists in. When you think about how art is developing these days, this is the frontier. I mean, where are the areas of exploration in the theatre?"

● *Aida* is at Earls Court (0171-373 8141) from April 23-25. *Monsters of Grace* is at the Barbican (0171-638 8891) from May 19-23

Factory blows the whistle

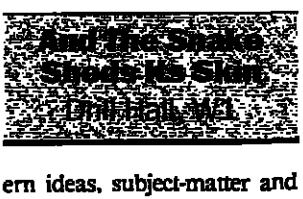
Hidden away in the small print of the programme for Opera Factory's swansong at the Drill Hall there's a nice double irony — acknowledgement of financial support from the D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust. This is both a not-quite-germane indication of the multiculturalism at which David Freeman is aiming, and a reminder that while the Factory has just had its funding axed, there is little prospect of D'Oyly Carte Opera ever getting any from an Arts Council, a Treasury, and behind them a Cabinet all hell-bent on turning this country culturally speaking into a parochial little backwater somewhere on the fringes of Europe.

Freeman's Factory has enlivened, infuriated and (occasionally) enchanted audiences for 16 years now, their work ranging from Birtwistle premieres to one of the best productions of *Costa fan tutte* in living memory, all on a pittance of public money. A country that cannot accommodate such a gaffly is poverty-stricken indeed.

Before the axe fell Freeman had grandiose plans for turning the Factory into "Theatre of the World", which this show, aptly titled, should have launched, an interdisciplinary theatre aimed at absorbing non-West-



Charlie Folorunsho plays Opera Factory's swansong



ern ideas, subject-matter and processes. *The Snake* has been long in gestation. Freeman's own text is drawn from the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and *Ishvara's Descent into the Underworld*. Music was to have been by Philip Glass, but in the event is

by the West African Habib Faye. The subject is creation, life and rebirth (gods), life and death (human beings), and apart from anything else the evening is an absorbing seminar on comparative mythology — Persephone, Orpheus, bull-dancing, the Kalevala, the Eucharist, all flash by.

It is not — words carefully chosen — a complete success, having the feel, perhaps intentionally, of "work in progress" exposed to the public at a dangerously early stage of that

progress. Subject and quasi-improvisatory treatment presuppose the months and months of preparation that, say, Peter Brook could indulge in with the sort of financial support that no one thought twice about in France. The text is deliberately flat, banal almost, the actors are not skilled enough to breathe life into it, and "received English" is a bit of a problem in so international an undertaking.

With another year to go, there might have been time to engage a writer, just as Freeman might have coaxed more music out of Faye — it's very good but there's simply not enough of it, though a piece whose first musical number is "Then plough my vulva" cannot be all bad.

Taken as a whole, though, the unfinished show is exhilaratingly un-British; Charlie Folorunsho (Gilgamesh) has blazing charisma; Annabel Cheetham sings expressively; Gilgamesh picking the Flower of Youth is a moment of exquisite visual poetry; and Saiko Susso's beautiful playing of the kora, a Senegalese stringed instrument, is alone worth the price of a ticket. That this work in progress should not be allowed to progress any further is a hideous reflection on our times.

RODNEY MILNES

The National Youth Orchestra, youngest of 50-year-olds, celebrated its half-century in style with Tuesday's Birthday Concert at the Barbican. For the 170-plus teenage instrumentalists, it was a performance that will never be forgotten; for the capacity audience, it was an evening to be relished both for what we heard and what we will hear in the future; for everyone it confirmed that the NYO is a national treasure.

Appropriately, the programme John Eliot Gardiner conducted matched one of Mahler's most grown-up works with music by the mature but eternally youthful Janáček. Neither composer is central to Gardiner's repertory, nor is Gardiner, notoriously tough in rehearsal, an obvious conductor to be working with the NYO; but these tender young players responded to him with excellent and idiomatic performances.

Gardiner drew playing of brilliant attack in Janáček's *Sinfonietta*, even if it was all a little loud and fast. An affectionate tribute to the composer's hometown of Brno, the score ought to evoke the tranquillity as well as bustle and marching bands. The brass fanfares could hardly have been more vivid, both as the music gains momentum at the beginning and at the blazing end, but the whistling upper strings and craggy winds also got a chance to prove themselves in this swirling music so characteristic of the composer.

Shaping up for a bright future

There was room for more quirkiness here, yet still the players dug into the pulsing rhythms and unequal phrases with relish.

From the high-voltage opening of *Das Lied von der Erde*, Gardiner moulded a taut reading that culminated in a superbly controlled and shaped finale. Every section of the orchestra shone, not least the strings in the quiet intro-



duction to the second movement which also showcased a lovely oboe solo. In *Der Abschied* the long, perfumed dusk was conjured up in beautifully balanced textures.

JOHN ALLISON

NEW CLASSICAL CDs: Spiky British eccentricity; vocal Russian authenticity; images of Adès

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■ **LORD BERNERS** *The Triumph of Neptune* etc English Northern Philharmonia/Royal Ballet Sinfonia/Lloyd-Jones *Marco Polo* 9.22.3711 *** £14.99

■ **LORD BERNERS**, that amiable English eccentric, is enjoying the limelight at a widely noticed bogosity. Perhaps "amiable" is not quite the word: Berners is a wicked, even cruel sense of humour, and many if his circle found themselves the butt of his practical joking.

All this comes through in a score like *The Triumph of Neptune*, recorded here complete for the first time. The work was commissioned by Diaghilev for the London season of his Ballet Russes in 1926, and it is far closer to the spiky, ironic style of Stravinsky or early Walton — even

Well — than to the pastoralist tradition of Vaughan Williams and Holst (for whom Berners had little time).

Together with the equally parodic *Valse Bourgeoise* and *Polka*, *Neptune* receives a spirited, accomplished performance from David Lloyd-Jones and the English Northern Philharmonia, while an ensemble of the orchestra's players does the honours for the jocular Man with the Moustache.

OPERA

John Higgins

■ **SERGEI LARIN** *Russian Arias* Philharmonia/Rozhdstvensky *Chandos CHAN 9603* *** £14.99

THE Russian tenor Sergei Larin was engaged for a few José at Covent Garden in the early 1990s but has not been heard there since. A pity. Chandos's recital, cleverly

selected, sticks to the Russian repertoire but still manages to demonstrate the extraordinary range of roles he is prepared to take on. It is framed, predictably enough, by Tchaikovsky with *Olegin* at the start and *The Queen of Spades* at the end. But even here there is a surprise: Larin sings not only Lensky in that first opera — and very well too — but also includes the couplets of M. Triquet. Herman in *The Queen of Spades* is even better, with Larin catching the half-mad obsessions of the outsider of the regiment.

In between there is more Tchaikovsky, *Mazepa* and *Cherevichki*. But other composers show Larin in a more delicate light, notably the Hindu merchant's lilting song from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Saiko*. It is not just a beefy

tenor, but one that can be trimmed down to inner pain and regret, as Lensky's Act II aria from *Olegin* proves early on. Gennady Rozhdstvensky's control of the Philharmonia ensures a totally authentic Russian sound throughout.

CHAMBER

Hilary Finch

■ **THOMAS ADES** *Living Toys* Various artists *EMI Classics Debut 5 72271 2* *** £7.49

THE *Living Toys* are the bright dreams of a boy, discovered in an anonymous Spanish manuscript, dancing with angels and bulls, fighting with bulls and soldiers. But they are also the enchanted playthings of 21-year-old Thomas Adès, the golden boy of young composers whose gift, like that of Purcell and Britten before him, is to transform and transfigure musical history as

it passes through his extraordinary imagination. The little suite which names this disc — the latest in EMI's enlightened Debut series — is played by the London Sinfonietta for whom it was written in 1993. And it is again a set of transitory images, this time of vanished idylls, which inspire Adès's first string quartet, *Arcadiana*, written a year later. The Endellion Quartet capture its fleeting glimpses of Papageno, of Schubert singing on the water, of Elgar's *Albion*, in a work which celebrates transience as only youth can perceive it.

The disc also includes the 1993 *Sonata da caccia*, Couperin filtered through Debussy through Adès; and *The Origin of the Harp*, tiny tone-poems for wind and strings, before concluding with a setting of Psalm 51 for organ and the men's voices of the choir of King's College Cambridge.

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CHANGING TIMES

Apocalypse now and then, please

Elaine Showalter finds that an author's vision of faith in millennium endgames tends to stimulate rather than comfort

In traditional scholarship, myths of apocalypse are either comic or tragic, ending in triumphant survival or fiery destruction; but for Marina Benjamin, they are melodramatic long-running soap operas "forever hurrying from one narrative cliffhanger to another".

At the end of the 19th century, English poets like Hardy sank to the occasion, with a gloomy conviction that theirs was the worst of times and composed portentous last words for last days.

Today, Benjamin argues, although some prophets maintain that our century is darker than all the rest, our obsessive anxiety about the coming millennium reflects our existential need for moral tension rather than any inherent wickedness of our own time.

At the end of the 20th century, apocalypse has been made routine. Some religious movements, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, that used to predict a regularly rescheduled Armageddon have given up the practice, and cult leaders are not embarrassed when their doomsday scenarios fail: they just congratulate themselves for having faith.

Religious or secular, she maintains, we have all unconsciously internalised the master narratives of endtime. Disasters like the Los Angeles earthquake, Chernobyl, or the Exxon oil spill are "mini-endings" that whet our expectation for the final catastrophe rather than appeasing it.

English history offers many millenarian groups, from Crusaders, Ranters, Levellers, Muggletonians, and Southcomians to the followers of Sister

Marie Gabriel who said the world would end in July 1994, and former footballer David Icke's mystic cosmology. Benjamin even meets John Allen, aka Johnny Dolphin, at his Institute of Ecotechnics in Bloomsbury, from which he masterminded Biosphere 2 as a try-out for colonising Mars.

The Millennium Dome may well be Britain's great contribution to the *fin de siècle* tradition, and I wouldn't be surprised if new Labour could come up with some of the celebratory millennial rituals that Benjamin points out are sadly lacking in our culture. We all need Millennial Resolutions, party hats, and a theme song.

But on the whole apocalyptic scenarios seem philosophically and theologically out of key with the dominant empiricism of British thought.

It was George Bernard Shaw, Benjamin points out, who described the Book of Revelation as "the curious record of the visions of a drug addict". She has to concede that despite British efforts, the United States still seems more prone to imagining and manufacturing the apocalypse. In America, she notes, "millenarianism does not even need to compete with mainline religion, since... it virtually is the mainline religion, and is currently spreading like wildfire".

Like Malise Ruthven, Louis Theroux, and other British explorers who have gone before, Benjamin made her own pilgrimages to investigate American millennial weirdness. She is especially interesting on the Mormons in Salt Lake City, where the Church of the Latter-day Saints shows a six-handkerchief (MAX) feature film on the pioneer trek called *Legacy*, and is rumoured to take in a billion dollars a year from tithing, as well as its income from real estate, media and industry.

With the economic boom and a vigorous missionary movement has come a spiritual boom. There are now more Mormons outside the US than within it, in such places as Africa, Chile and Japan. But this influx of eager converts has led to internal problems, as a Church that has already backed down or compromised on plural

marriage and coffee-drinking faces multi-culturalism. Mormon intellectuals have taken to rereading the sacred books in order to find hints that some Mormon pioneers could have settled in Polynesia instead of Missouri where the New Jerusalem has been expected to appear.

Overall, Benjamin suggests, apocalyptic scripts will continue to be rewritten in this resourceful way because we need the hope of salvation they hold out, and because the sense of living at the end of the world gives life a zest it might otherwise lack.

But many millenarian groups are not quite so benign as the Mormons.



The end is sky-high: Britain's grand contribution to the *fin de siècle* tradition — the dramatic beginnings of the Millennium Dome in Greenwich

Our man in Vietnam, Britain, Burma...

Jon Swain praises an untiring campaign journalist

John Pilger is Britain's most unflinching campaigning journalist and the maker of 50 film documentaries. From Vietnam to East Timor, from Burma to Britain, he has written about the underclasses and oppressed of the world. In the process he has attracted fame as well as criticism from those who accuse him of distortion.

In 1963 Pilger joined that "great moving belt" of Australians who headed for Europe. He arrived in London in a snowstorm clad in a velvet jacket and a drip-dry shirt. It was not a promising start to a Fleet Street career. But he persevered, landing a job with the *Daily Mirror*, not because of his journalistic talents but because they thought, erroneously, that he was a fine spin bowler who would enhance the *Mirror's* cricket team.

Pilger did not know how to spin a cricket ball and eventually had to own up to Michael Christiansen, the *Mirror's* assistant editor in charge of features, who retorted: "An Australian who can't play cricket! Disgraceful!" Pilger thought he would be fired, but Christiansen recognised that his ability to spin a yarn, if not a cricket ball, was outstanding; he kept him on.

In the old *Mirror* Pilger had found the perfect niche for the crusading journalism for which he would become famous. He laments, as do we all, the passing of the old *Daily Mirror* under Hugh Cudlipp, written for the times, for the people.

Pilger has not always got it right: none of us does. Critics argue he is blind in one eye, lacks objectivity and is capable of seeing only one side of the argument. In a non-ideological age his rhetoric remains very much of someone on the Left though he does not regard himself as especially radical but as liberal and democratic. Nor has he learnt that ideology and rhetoric do not always equate with realities. But there is no doubting his idealism in pursuit of justice and exposing human rights violations. He does this with unflinching zeal, with powerful and persuasive prose in *Hidden Agendas*, his new book.

Hidden Agendas is not a "feel-good" book. Indeed, it is a book which could make you very cynical about the workings of the modern world and the power-gatherers of our new "media age". Digging like a plough through the headlines Pilger has turned up the rich subsoil of deceit and deception governing so much in international politics and big business in the second half of the 20th century.

His chapters on Vietnam are particularly absorbing: it is the country he has covered most comprehensively for the past 30 years and having always identified closely with the Vietnamese-communist cause he laments that the achievements of that struggle

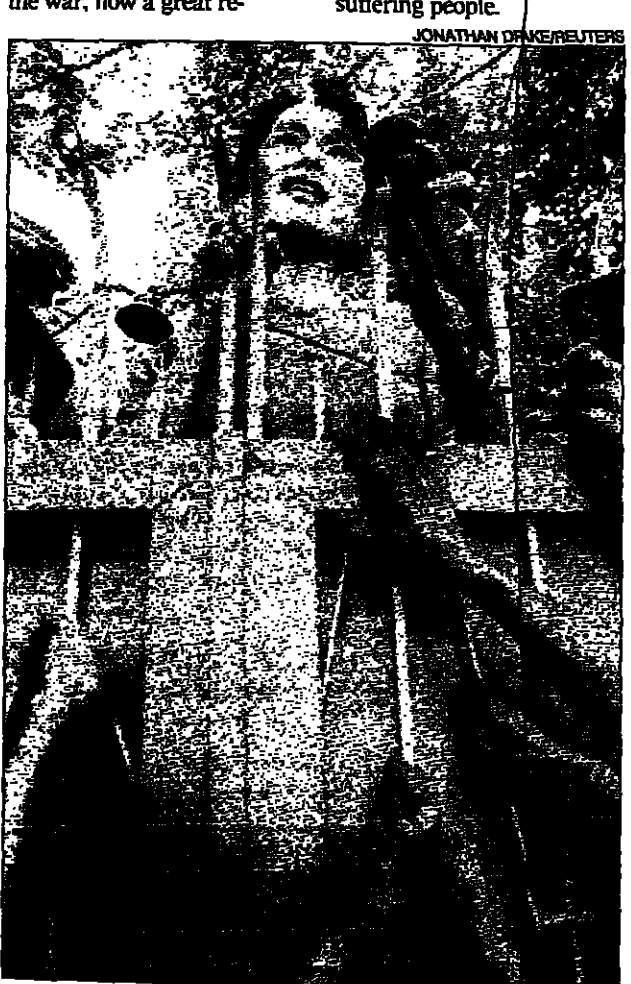
are now eroded: foreigners whom the Vietnamese sacrificed so much blood to repel — the French, Japanese and Americans — are back again exploiting the country, forcing it to make capitalist, free-market reforms that have created divisions of wealth that, he fears, are leading it ultimately towards a form of recolonisation and impoverishment. It is a debate worth hearing at this time when the economies of the South-East Asian "tigers", which Vietnam has been encouraged by the West to ape, collapse in a morass of overwhelming debt.

Pilger also praises the environmental rescue of Vietnam from the terrible damage of the war, how a great re-greening campaign has been undertaken by the authorities in areas once drizzled in Agent Orange when not a tree remained. It is a sad irony, of which Pilger seems ignorant, that the Vietnam Government has undertaken a programme of reforestation in its own country while colluding in the plundering of neighbouring Cambodia's magnificent teak forests in an illegal timber trade that will make the forests commercially logged out in three to five years.

Pilger uses his prolific pen to salute a long gallery of courageous people who are resisting oppression. There is Kung San Sun Kyi, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning opposition leader whose lonely struggle under house arrest in Burma against the undemocratic rule of the State Order and Restoration Council (Slorc) is truly inspirational. "In the end they can't stop freedom," she tells Pilger. "We shall have our time." No doubt the Burmese people one day will.

There is Xanana Gusmao, the jailed leader of the East Timorese national liberation front who smuggled a remarkably courageous interview out of his Indonesian prison cell to be published by Pilger. *Hidden Agendas* should be welcomed, above all, for giving a voice to these courageous and suffering people.

Jonathan Davies/Reuters



Freedom fighter: Burmese dissident Aung San Suu Kyi

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Looking for a fresh angle on odd pieces

The Victorians would have called Blake Morrison a miscellaneous writer. He has published two collections of poetry and a book for children; he has written a play and a film script; he is the author of a volume of so-called confessional autobiography and a book about the murder of the Liverpool infant James Bulger. There is also a good deal of journalism, and Granta has now allowed him to make a selection from what he calls his "stories and pieces".

Publishers are generally leery of collections of occasional writing and mutter about the vanity of authors. They will concede that they do something to keep a writer's name in the public mind between proper books, but incline to the view that yesterday's features or Op-Ed pieces or book reviews belong in the fish and chip shop, not served up a second time between hard

IAN MCINTYRE
TOO TRUE
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ISBN 1 85207 162 4

covers or trickled out as paperback originals. Charles Peguy, a poet as well as a polemicist, put the matter economically: "Homer is new this morning, but nothing, perhaps, is as old as today's newspaper."

Morrison acknowledges that it is impossible to disguise the ephemeral nature of such pieces. He claims, however, that where he has cut or rewritten, his purpose has been different — "the hope of making them truer or more accurate than they succeeded in being the first time round".

That does not strike me as the main problem. Freshness apart, what recycled journalism crucially lacks is context.

Gone beyond recall are the mood and micro-climate of the day the piece came off the press — perspectives gleaned from other media, gossip in pub and club, the whole shifting, disorderly tangle of private and public cross-reference which informs and colours everything we read or write.

Morrison has a good story about the Iranian poet who tried to bribe the Nobel Literature Committee by shipping over 18 crates of pistachio nuts, but he can be very earnest, particularly about education ("A growing number of universities, including of course the Open University, have made higher learning available to people who used not to have access to it: single-parents and early school-leavers included"). He also sometimes tumbles into plain silliness: "Like other great Scandinavians," he announces, "Alfred Nobel was a misanthrope," or "What connects sex and bicycling is that they offer a kind of self-transcendence."

He has an adventurous way with words, although he has a tendency to flog "epiphany". He can call both John Clare and Auden as character witnesses for "soddlie", I wouldn't, on the other hand, put much money on his resurrectionist ambitions for "swive" as a replacement for the most common of our four-letter words.

THERE are those who believe that, when not masterminding the defeat of the Spanish Armada or dancing with the Earl of Essex, Queen Elizabeth I was secretly writing Shakespeare's plays, since only one royally born could so appreciate the burdens of kingship. In his new novel, Robert Nye goes further and conjectures that the playwright was conceived after a brief encounter between the Queen and John Shakespeare in the grounds of Kenilworth Castle. Immediately after her confinement, the Queen gave up the child to his father and the rest is history... or rather myth.

Nye's novel, a brilliantly inventive exploration of the myths which have accrued around Shakespeare, employs the same rumbustious tone, digressive manner and bawdy humour as his earlier *Falstaff*. It offers a fictional counterpart to Samuel Schoenbaum's *Shakespeare's Lives*; where Schoenbaum recorded the variants of Shakespeare's story, Nye embroiders them. The



Morrison: reworked pieces from his cuttings book

"Rootsiness" did not appeal hugely, and I shall not be too cast down if "boysis", "cunsey" and "erotophobia" fail to make it into the next edition of the *OED*.

The pieces which stand up best in *Too True* are those to do with writing and writers. Morrison makes good use of an interview with Valerie Eliot, he writes perceptively about Ted Hughes and gener-

ously about Philip Larkin. For the rest, he mainly detains us in colour-supplement land with slim pieces about his obsession with football, the North-South divide and foxes in South London suburbs. The style is discursive, at times almost rambling. Sardonic old Rebecca West would have allowed that he has what it takes — "an ability to meet the challenge of filling the space".

quasi-mystical portrait of Shakespeare's sexuality is richly complex; to judge by his experience in the wings, it was not only the playwright's imagination which was stirred by boys in skirts.

The novel is a highly enjoyable compendium of country lore, arcane history, theatrical anecdote and textual criticism. Its one misjudgment is the inclusion of odd-Shakespearean verse.

Nye's verbal exuberance resembles that of Anthony Burgess, another of the Bard's biographers, and he shares Burgess's love both of neologisms (Shakespeare's dual profession makes him an "actor") and of puns (Southampton is "the face that launched a thousand quips"). The author is as creative a borrower as his subject, appropriating anecdotes from later writers such as Noel Coward and dressing them in Elizabethan clothing. His Shakespeare may not pass muster with the masters of the national curriculum, but it will be a treasure trove for everyone else.

Will to live

Michael Arditti
THE LATE MR SHAKESPEARE
By Robert Nye
Corgi £16.99
ISBN 1 85619 536 8

narrator, the elderly actor Picklehering, declares: "This is the story of William Shakespeare. It is a pack of lies and my heart's blood."

Picklehering claims that, in his youth, he originated many of Shakespeare's great female roles. Writing in 1666 when the Bard is despised as "vulgar and crabb'd, an uncouth spirit", he is determined to offer a corrective. At times, his

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On which battlefield did Hitler really trip up? M. R. D. Foot finds out

Choked flames of the Führer

The world war against Hitler had many battles in it, few of them decisive. For instance, in the Battle of France he shattered in six weeks one of the world's great military powers. The Battle of Britain that followed it marked his first defeat, and ensured a long war instead of a series of short ones. The Battle of Stalingrad, fought from September 1942 to early February 1943, his second significant defeat, helped

to ensure his downfall 27 months later. In this brilliant book, Anthony Beevor explains what happened at Stalingrad from Russian and German sources combined; he has got beyond both sides' propaganda, which he properly discounts, to write a compelling piece of military history. He begins by sketching the outbreak of the Russo-German War in June 1941 — frankly, from the start, like the Japanese-American War that

followed six months later, a racial war, a conflict between two national groups that, for the time being at least, were utterly unable to accept each other as human equals. He describes how many village elders from the subject races of western Russia came out to greet the German invaders with bread and salt; only to be brushed aside as Slavs, therefore inferiors, and treated like dirt; unless, like their Jewish fellow villagers, they were summarily shot. He proves that the German Army's hands were far from clean, even if the worst atrocities against the Jews — such as the massacre of more than 30,000 people at Babi Yar near Kiev — were mainly the work of the police.

As a matter of routine, the invaders burnt villages and took what they chose from the villagers, often shooting them down as well. "This impression of genocide against the Slavs aroused, along with the desire for revenge, a pitiless determination not to be beaten." Stalingrad provided the testing ground.

STALINGRAD
By Anthony Beevor
Viking, £25
ISBN 0 070 870 951

As a matter of routine, the invaders burnt villages and took what they chose from the villagers, often shooting them down as well. "This impression of genocide against the Slavs aroused, along with the desire for revenge, a pitiless determination not to be beaten." Stalingrad provided the testing ground. Beevor describes the elation of all-but-unopposed advances over the steppes of western Russia, and gives some idea of the colossal distances covered: most of the German infantry who fought at Stalingrad had walked more than 2,000 miles to get there. Once arrived, they became involved in what their Führer had always been determined to avoid — street-fighting; and in streets that the preliminary attentions of the Luftwaffe had reduced to rubble, thus multiplying the Red Army's chances for short-range ambush.

He shows how General Paulus, the German Army commander on the spot, was drawn into a bunker-by-bunker, beam-by-beam slogging match at close and very close range that he had never intended; and how bloody-minded his opponents were. The Red Army was notoriously ready to spend men; let one example suffice. General Rodinsev, who had fought at Guadalajara, took the 13th Guards' Rifle Division of more than 10,000 men across the Volga into already ruined Stalingrad; 320 of his men were left when the Germans finally surrendered. Moreover, behind — quite literally behind — the front stood the NKVD, the Soviet

secret police, who established a tight grip over this, as over every other battlefield. In the winter of 1942-43, and near Stalingrad, the NKVD shot dead 13,500 Red Army soldiers who had tried to desert. Beevor is right to blame Hitler for not letting Paulus disengage himself in time from the trap into which he had fallen. Stalin's armies mounted a wholly unexpected counter-offensive, behind Paulus's army's left flank, which cut it off, and once cut off, not all Goering's boasts of forthcoming air support could rescue it. Hitler was fond of saying that his generals had not read enough Karl May, the German G. A. Henry. He had read too much, and by midwinter 1942-43 had ceased to distinguish fantasy from reality, though none of his generals dared to tell him so. Beevor's grip on reality remains firm. He shows how much both sides depended on air as well as land power. He is deft at introducing light personal touches: the 13-year-old girl, buried by an early bomb that hit her school, dug out by her companions, found to be paralysed and strapped to a stretcher to be ferried across the Volga to hospital; Man-stein's pet dachshund, which would raise his paw at the command "Heil Hitler!"; or the doctor who cherished the bitter end a leather-bound copy of *Faust* on onion skin, and had it taken from him by a captor who used it to roll *makhorka* cigarettes.

He does not let these stories distort either his strategy, his tactics or the logistic picture. All three became acute for the Germans.

No one in the German, or indeed the Russian, high command seems to have taken in quite how frightful life was, for both sides, inside the cauldron; but Beevor comes close to it. The incessant noise, the stench, the ever-present lice, the intense cold, the hunger, the thirst — between them these made enough of a hell on earth, without the strong probability of a nasty and violent death thrown in as well. Astoundingly, almost 10,000 civilians survived the siege, including 904 children, nine of whom could be reunited afterwards with their parents. The wounded suffered worst. Of the 600 German doctors in the trap, none was among those who were flown out. Nobody seems to have escaped on foot: it was too cold, and there was no food left.



Johnson is sworn in, flanked by his wife Lady Bird and Jackie Kennedy, 1963

Get the lowdown through the hi-fi

Raymond Seitz rewinds the soundtrack to Johnson's presidency

Pick up this book, read a few pages, and suddenly there you are, sitting in the Oval Office in the shambling, overpowering, enveloping presence of Lyndon Baines Johnson, 36th President of the United States. As likely as not Johnson has a telephone shoved up against his large, droopy face. He listens intently, his eyes narrowing to reptilian slits, and then he speaks in his rolling Hill Country drawl. You hear the boom.

Johnson was the only President to record his term of office from start to finish. When Richard Nixon took over the White House in 1969, Johnson showed him the concealed system, gleeful that he had been so attentive to posterity. Nixon disapproved, however, and had the system removed. Only later in his own presidency did Nixon fatefully decide to wire up the office again, this time with new, voice-activated equipment.

Johnson was erratic in switching on his device, so the record is fragmentary and often disjointed. Still, 95,000 conversations were recorded over 643 hours, and this first volume of the Johnson tapes, superbly edited and set in context by Michael Beschloss, covers the nine months from the assassination of John Kennedy in November 1963 to Johnson's nomination at the Democratic Party convention the following August.

Lyndon Johnson was famous for the "Treatment," a masterful blend of sweet-talkin' flattery and arm-twistin' cajolery. Part country-boy charm and part classroom bully, his won't-take-no-for-an-answer style could overwhelm the stiffest resistance. Every exchange was a conversational bearhug.

One reason The Treatment was so effective was that it was so transparent. Thus, to Kay Graham, proprietor of *The Washington Post*: "When I hear your voice I feel like a young animal on the ranch — just want to jump the fence." Or to the lugubrious Director of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover: "I got more confidence in your judgment than anybody in town." And to the Georgia Senator Richard Russell: "No one has ever been more to me than you. Dick — except my mother." When all else failed, Johnson retreated into parloric appeals. Bargaining with his wife's New York hairdresser, he says: "All right, now I'm a poor man, and I don't make much money... [but] this is your country, and I want to see what you want to do about it."

Beneath the LBJ syrup, however, was a calculating, crafty politician. Johnson was a score-keeper. He could recite the latest rankings from a Kansas poll or the most recent nose-count from an Oregon delegation. Describing his State of the Union address to the columnist Drew Pearson,

(even paranoids have enemies, and Bobby was indeed intent on retrieving the Kennedy standard). Key conversations between LBJ and RFK were not recorded, but on one occasion Johnson said to a confidant: "When this fellow [Bobby] looks at me it's like he's going to look a hole through me." Early in the Johnson presidency, Vietnam was still in the background, a nettlesome problem but a manageable one. There is, however, an eerie foreboding in LBJ's frequent late-night conversations with his friend and mentor Richard Russell. Russell was a sly old fox who could spot a no-win situation a mile away. He counselled Johnson to get out. "It isn't important a damn bit," the Senator says. "I'd take a half-million men [which it did]. They'd be bogged down for ten years [which they were]."

TAKING CHARGE
The Johnson White House Tapes, 1963-64
Edited by Michael R. Beschloss
Simon & Schuster, £20
ISBN 0 684 80407 7

Everett Dirksen. When Johnson did a favour for you, he made sure you knew it.

Johnson worried about his enemies and was never sure about his friends. Though his legislative record in the spring of 1964 was as spectacular as anything since Franklin Roosevelt — civil rights, tax reform, the war on poverty — he felt politically vulnerable, particularly as the illegitimate heir to the Kennedy legacy. He was solicitous of the Kennedy parents, Joe and Rose, and frequently on the phone to Jackie. But he suspected Bobby was out to overthrow him with feet of clay.

The transcripts that Michael Beschloss has skillfully assembled present the larger-than-life Johnson in all his contrasting colours. They reveal, as Beschloss says, "the primal Johnson": vain, generous, mean-spirited, coy, sensitive, wheeler-dealer, forceful — a monumental President with feet of clay.

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BLACKWELL'S BOOKSHOPS

The sour milk of human kindness

Kasturba Gandhi, wife of the Mahatma and the "Mother of India", was like Patient Grisél in European legend: she endured every humiliation to emerge at the end with nothing but praise for her loyalty.

This biography by her grandson is the most sympathetic family memoir, but it is honest enough to demonstrate how the sainted Mahatma's personal behaviour was often ugly and wicked, putting him in a tradition of philanthropists who managed to combine compassion for the whole human race with harshness bordering on cruelty towards members of their own families.

Their betrothal at the age of seven followed by marriage at 13 was the union of two moderately wealthy families, and Kasturba might have expected a future of comfort and prestige. It became, instead, one of hardship and deprivation. Yet it was not Gandhi's political work in

Jad Adams

DAUGHTER OF MIDNIGHT
The Child Bride of Gandhi

By Arun Gandhi
Blake, £16.99
ISBN 1 85782 220 5

South Africa and India that made Kasturba's life a misery: she joined these battles with enthusiasm, going to prison for the cause, in the company of other women. What tested Kasturba to breaking point was her husband's personal behaviour.

He said he learnt principles of passive resistance from her, and indeed it was the only form of resistance she was able to offer his despotic whims. The most important of these concerned sex. He was having sex with Kasturba, despite her pregnancy, at the time his father died. The baby was born prematurely and

died early. These combined facts stimulated the guilt that tormented Gandhi all his life, and was the motivating force for many of his acts of self-abnegation such as fasting and self-administering enemas. Poor Kasturba was the unwitting object of his self-disgust at being an ordinary human being.

His heroic efforts of renunciation and self-denial were chosen by himself, but imposed on her. He insisted not only on her emptying the chamberpots of inhabitants of his house (a task, in her mind, fit only for Untouchables) but threw her off the premises when she did not do so cheerfully. When her small box of possessions was stolen, he refused to call the police, expressing surprise that she should even own a box of things worth stealing. He insisted they live in poverty and rejected gifts that might have secured the future education of their sons: he gave away her jewellery.

While it can hardly have been the author's intention, the book reads as a long indictment of Kasturba for failing to protect her sons against her husband. The eldest boy, Harilal, scored highest in an exam to qualify to go to study in London, but Gandhi refused to let him



Together in Bombay, 1902

have his prize, such as his fear of being accused of nepotism. "He just does not care for any of us," Harilal remarked bitterly and left his father's house. When another son, Manilal, sent his brother ten rupees to relieve his poverty, Gandhi drove him, too, from his home. Manilal was already suffering from his father's principles: when he was 18 he was caught about to embrace a woman and was forced to take a vow of celibacy till he was 30. Kasturba emerges as a calm and dignified character, but no match for her husband, and in common with other books about him, *Daughter of Midnight* fails to reconcile the essential contradiction in Gandhi's character: that a man who was a sanctimonious prig could also be an empire-breaking revolutionary leader.

Jad Adams's The Dynasty: The Nehru-Gandhi Story (with Phillip Whitehead) is published by Penguin, priced £7.99.

MPs play follow the leader

Michael Gove

The Road to Number Ten
By Alan Watkins
Duckworth, £25
ISBN 0 7156 2815 1

Like the better, that is to say older, sort of academic, Watkins makes history a matter of character and motivation rather than the working out of profound forces. In *The Road to Number Ten* he introduces the general reader to Humphrey Berkeley, the witty and independent Tory backbencher who introduced democracy to his party a century after his party had introduced it to the country. He also reintroduces older readers to, and acquaints others with, David Basnett, the lugubrious dinosaur who stalked Labour conferences in the distant past when the trade unions still had some influence over the party they created.

Although Berkeley was a figure from the Sixties, and Basnett from

the Eighties, both seem unimaginably distant now. Before 1963 Tory leaders emerged after consultation among a "magic circle" of party elders. It was, according to Berkeley, a process "more appropriate for the entoolment of an African chief". Yet there seems something equally tribal and anachronistic about the arguments over what proportion of the votes for Labour leader should be

cast by union bosses on behalf of their membership, many of whom did not even vote Labour at general elections.

Now that both parties have followed the Liberal example and chosen to elect their leader by a process that is broadly one member, one vote, all these "fancy franchises" have the quaint charm of stone circles and corn dollies — relics of Old England.

Yet even as party leaders have come to be chosen by progressively more democratic means, so the threat grows of prime ministers being chosen, once again, at one remove from the people. The prospect of proportional representation denying parties majorities at future general

elections would make the choice of prime minister, as William Waldegrave has pointed out, a matter for cliques to carve up in the Commons and the monarch to ratify. In the name of modernisation we would have reverted to the 18th century.

Should such a Namierite new world arise it could have no better chronicler than Alan Watkins, whose style, a blend of El Vino's anecdote and archival detail, combines charm and authority. It is the perfect vehicle for conveying both the arresting peculiarities and political significance of his subjects as well as holding the attention of the bedtime reader. Even Watkins nods, however, and on page 238 he is mistaken in saying Michael Portillo was Chief Secretary to the Treasury in June 1995. He was then Employment Secretary, the last man to hold that post.

ALAN WATKINS is a gifted necromancer. Individuals whose political lives are over, and whose names are forgotten, are brought back to life to become fascinating actors in the absorbing dramas of these pages. This work is ostensibly the story of how successive politicians came to lead their party and their country. But the real interest, as so often in politics, lies in the stories of the kingmakers and courtiers.

Watkins takes as his theme the rise of party democracy and the warning of the royal prerogative in the selection of our leaders, but what might sound at first like a dry constitutional treatise proves an absorbing series of vignettes and character studies. It is no more than one might expect from the author of *Brief Lives*: a quite brilliant, but tragically out of print, collection of potted biographies. It stands comparison to Aubrey's original.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Poor state of union lures Wales' finest to defect

By Christopher Irvine

THE rebirth of the Wales rugby league team after two years is expected to attract several former league players who returned to union, as well as a new generation of players in advance of a probable Super League outfit based in South Wales as early as 1999.

Jonathan Davies, who gave warning this week that the chaotic state of rugby union in Wales had made it more vulnerable than at any time to recruitment of leading players by league, has been invited to help prepare Wales against an Emerging England XIII at Wides on July 19.

Clive Griffiths, the Wales coach, himself back in union with London Welsh and who has been assisting the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU), said: "The Welsh set-up isn't flourishing, which presents league with a great opportunity. There are a lot of players keen to try their hand and, with both codes now professional, there's no reason why they shouldn't."

Griffiths has a temporary release clause in his contract with London Welsh that allows him to coach the Wales league team and he insisted on the same when he signed Rowland Phillips, the former Workington and Great Britain forward. Permission is to be sought to make Scott Quinnett, of Richmond, Richard Webster, of Bath, and Kevin Ellis, of Sale, available.

Whether Scott Gibbs, who

wants to return to league at some stage, can get round his contractual obligations to Swansea and the WRU is uncertain. Rob Appleyard, the Swansea and Wales flanker, is one of several members of the 1992 Wales league students side now playing top-flight rugby union who is to be approached, while youngsters such as Leigh Davies, Kevin Morgan and Gareth Wyatt are also seen as potential recruits by a Super League side based in either Cardiff or Swansea.

Griffiths said: "People like Scott Gibbs and Allan Bateman will be coming off a hard Wales trip to South Africa, but provided players want to play and we go through the right channels with regard to contracts and insurance, I'm confident of building a strong side with union players around a core of full-time league professionals."

The thriving Cardiff academy side is providing a supply of home-grown talent and the Emerging England fixture will ensure Wales of valuable preparation for meeting the touring New Zealand side in October. The England team will consist mainly of under-21 players and is seen by Andy Goodway, the Great Britain coach, as an important stepping stone between the academy and full international sides.

A triangular tournament involving Scotland, Ireland and France in November is also a significant step towards the establishment of a five nations' competition by the Rugby Football League. Phil Clarke, the Wigan chief executive, has confirmed that Phil Kingsley-Jones, Jonah Lomu's manager, had visited him for discussions about the New Zealand wing. "He contacted us and showed us a video of some of Jonah's old try-scoring feats, but we've got Wendell Sailor here next year and Jason Robinson already, so there's hardly a need," Clarke said.



Davies preparing team

The young Rose struggling to bloom

John Hopkins follows the Walker Cup player looking to follow in Westwood's illustrious footsteps

Among the congratulations that Lee Westwood received after his victory in a professional tournament in New Orleans earlier this month was one sent from a golf club in the Midlands to the Augusta National Golf Club. It read: "To the winner of the 1991 McEvoy Trophy, best wishes for the 1998 Masters."

The memories of Lee Westwood and his victory at Copt Heath, Solihull, seven years ago were bright when the 1998 McEvoy Trophy got under way yesterday. Which is more than can be said for the light and the weather. Snow had fallen during the night, thus confirming the arrival of summer in England.

At 7am, the temperature was one degree above freezing and the snow was settling. As a result, the first round of this distinguished junior competition was delayed and later cancelled, reducing the event to 72 holes. It was a bitterly cold day — and later, it rained — so the realistic par was probably two strokes more than the actual of 71.

Seven years ago, no one would have said that Westwood would advance as quickly and successfully as he has. On the other hand, if Justin Rose, a Walker Cup player last August, were to do what Westwood has done, no one would be surprised. Rose, whose handicap is plus 2.4, has looked the part for some years and continues to do so. Several competitors in this event have gone on to achieve Walker Cup honours, but Rose is the first player to compete in the McEvoy — that is, under 18 on January 1. Rose will be 18 in July.

added half a stone. "I can no longer hide behind a one iron," he said. A 75 leaves him a bit of work to do in the 36 holes today if he is to win the handsome silver salver for the first time. His best result from three previous attempts is third in 1995, the year that he narrowly failed to qualify for the Open Championship. His 75 was five strokes better than Westwood's first round in 1991.

Copt Heath has a tough start, two par fours, both 440 yards or more, into a north wind, and it was over these holes that Rose played best. He was one under par on the 4th tee, but on such a day, club selection can be difficult, rain causes clubs to slip and hands get cold and Rose was not as sharp around the greens as he might have been. He three-putted from the fringe of the long 15th and

chipped clumsily on the 16th. Rose's schedule resembles that of a touring professional. Tomorrow, he leaves to represent Europe in a Ryder Cup-style amateur competition against Southern Asia and the Pacific

in Australia, with Graham Rankin and Gary Wolstenholme, his Walker Cup team-mates. Next month, he will compete in the Benson and Hedges event at The Oxfordshire and in the European Grand Prix in June. Commitments will prevent him from competing in the Hampshire Hog, the Selborne Salver and the West of England championship.

David Griffiths, of West Herts, competing in this event for a third time, had a 30th putt on the 18th for a 71. Griffiths, who reached the semi-final of the Amateur Championship last summer, birdied the 13th and 14th and, like Rose, dropped a stroke on the 15th before picking up another birdie on the 16th.

Leading scores, page 42



Rose looks apprehensive after hitting an iron during the first day of the McEvoy Trophy at Copt Heath. Photograph: Mike Scott

His schedule resembles that of a touring professional

Coltart feels pinch even before teeing off

ANDREW COLTART was brimming over with good intentions when he embarked on British Airways flight BA1396 at Heathrow last Tuesday, but when he reached his destination in Manchester the milk of his human kindness swiftly turned sour.

When he left London to play in a golf day for multiple sclerosis charities, he had the regulation 14 clubs in his bag. When he opened it, there were but 12 left. Coltart was still fuming when he recounted the story as he prepared for the Carnes Open, which starts here today. One thing has to be said for the thief — he knows a good golf club when he sees one. He stole the

two most valuable clubs in the 27-year-old Scott's bag, a much sought-after Titleist titanium driver worth more than £300 and a Scotty Cameron Santa Fe, the Rolls-Royce of putters, worth £200. Coltart might say that the loss of £500 worth of golf clubs would not make an appreciable dent in Coltart's wallet — he has, after all, earned nearly £149,000 on the PGA European Tour this year — but that is hardly the point. For a start, he topped the Australian order of merit during the winter with the putter and won the Qatar Masters last month with it and the driver.

Sentimental about them he may not be, but he knows he could play winning golf with them. He has since acquired another, similar driver, although this one has nine degrees of loft instead of the ten-degree model that disappeared. He has also got another Scotty Cameron masterpiece and says he is putting pretty well with it. However, Coltart still does not harbour kind thoughts about the world's favourite airline — motto: to fly to serve. Being the generous soul that he is, he went ahead and played in the MS day, but promised himself that he would report the loss when he got back to Manchester Airport on Thursday morning. Even that went wrong. He had barely opened his conversation with a friendly police officer before a fire alarm went off and the building had to be evacuated. It was not the end of Coltart's misfortunes. To pile indignity upon indignity, while in Manchester he slept on "a dodgy pillow on a dodgy bed", which meant that he returned to Southern parts with a pain between the shoulder blades and a yearning to wring the neck of an unknown kleptomaniac baggage attendant. The pain has almost gone. The murderous thoughts endure.

SHEEHAN ON BRIDGE advertisement with text by Robert Sheehan and a small table of cards.

KEENE ON CHESS advertisement with text by Raymond Keene and a chessboard diagram.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS advertisement listing various horse racing results.

West passed and North opened One No Trump (15-17). Thereafter North-South bid to Six Clubs. East doubling a cue bid of Four Hearts by North on the way. Knowing that East had the king of hearts, declarer put up the ace of hearts on the opening lead. He drew trumps in two rounds with the king and queen. At this point he needs three tricks in spades to discard his losing hearts, before playing on diamonds. Is it correct to take the simple spade finesse, or the ruffing spade finesse? Helness played ace and king of spades and continued with the jack. With East holding the queen that was the successful line. It was also the best percentage line. Finessing the first jack of spades on the first round makes the extra spade trick whenever West has the queen; playing for the ruffing finesse via ace, king and jack makes whenever East has the

Chess puzzle section titled '100 years ago' and 'Diagram of final position' with a chessboard and text.

Advertisements for Ripon and Cheitnam horse racing events.

WORD-WATCHING section with a list of words and their definitions.

WINNING MOVE section with a chess puzzle and solution.

Advertisements for horse racing specialists and Richard's finds.

EQUESTRIANISM

Simon says sights set on winning world title

FROM JENNY MACARTHUR IN HELSINKI

HUGO SIMON, who is attempting a fourth success in the Volvo Showjumping World Cup this week, was a comfortable winner of the opening warm-up class here yesterday on ET, his defending champion, an 11-year-old Hannoverian. He then revealed that the trophy was not his main priority this year.

"For sure I will be trying," the diminutive Austrian, 55, said, "but I have won this competition three times. My main aim is to win the world championships in October. Aiming to keep ET fresh for the championships, he has taken him to only three shows so far this year, but has finished in the first three at each. Yesterday, in contrast to many of the other riders, who were using the class as a schooling round, Simon decided it was time for ET to have "a sharper". If this was a ploy to intimidate his rivals, it could hardly have been more effective. Looking every inch a champion, ET soared over the 12 fences, finishing nearly a second ahead of the runner-up, Sanna Salonen, of Finland, on Fortunella.

The three Britons in the class settled for a more leisurely pace. Michael Whitaker, on Virtual Village Ashley, produced the best performance, finishing tenth. Geoff Billington and It's Otto, who hope to win a fourth World Cup for Great Britain, were also clear, but more than six seconds slower.

John Whitaker, Britain's most successful World Cup rider, is not having much luck. Already without Welham, his top horse, who is recovering from a leg injury, he learnt yesterday that he is drawn first in the 10-year-old Virtual Village Grandprix in the opening speed round today, the most influential leg of the three-part final and one in which, traditionally, riders must finish in the top eight to have any chance of success.

It's always difficult when you don't know how the course is riding, Whitaker said, "but I'll just go in and do my own thing. Grandprix is very well and is certainly not feeling his age." Whitaker, who won on Milton in 1990 and 1991 and was runner-up last year, had little consolation in the class yesterday. Randi, his reserve horse, stopped unexpectedly at the ninth fence. In the second warm-up class, Michael Whitaker again produced the best British performance. Riding Virtual Village Two Step, the horse he will ride in the second and third legs of the World Cup, he finished sixth after a faultless round. RESULTS: Warm Up 1 (power and speed): 1. ET (H Simon, Austria) 0 faults, 21.08sec; 2. Fortunella (S Salonen, Fin) 0 faults, 21.09sec; 3. Abbey Park (M Hayward, Sw) 0, 27.16sec; 4. Warm-up 2 (pace): 1. Renna, Princeton (A Baker, Aust) 50.82; 2. Salmorra (S Collesse, Ita) 50.84; 3. Royaltime (N Garson, US) 51.30

3.50 FARM FED CHICKEN HANDICAP advertisement with race details.

4.25 SKELTON MAIDEN STAKES advertisement with race details.

5.00 NEWBY APPRENTICE HANDICAP advertisement with race details.

Melka advertisement for men's casual clothing.

FOOTBALL: DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL AT WHITE HART LANE COPIES THE OLD TRAFFORD MODEL

Spurred on by thoughts of a future perfect

David Pleat is building a youth academy at Tottenham. Matt Dickinson reports

This summer, David Pleat will move his office from White Hart Lane to the Tottenham Hotspur training ground. It is no big deal to him, but he recognises that it could be to others. "You know what it's like when a club is struggling," he said. "Everyone is trying to dig up little angles."

So before anyone gets the idea that Pleat is preparing to take up residence behind the manager's desk presently occupied by Christian Gross, he is quick to explain. "I need to be up at Chigwell to talk to players about contracts and to be on hand for the new youth academy that is so vital to this club." End of story — or so he hopes.

That Pleat feels the need to justify why he is moving his office is apparent, though, sums up the mistrust at White Hart Lane, where stories of unrest and subsequent denials have been falling thicker than the snow. Chris Armstrong sulks after being substituted — only natural, his manager says. Darren Anderton is angry not to be playing — he is not fit enough yet, the club says.

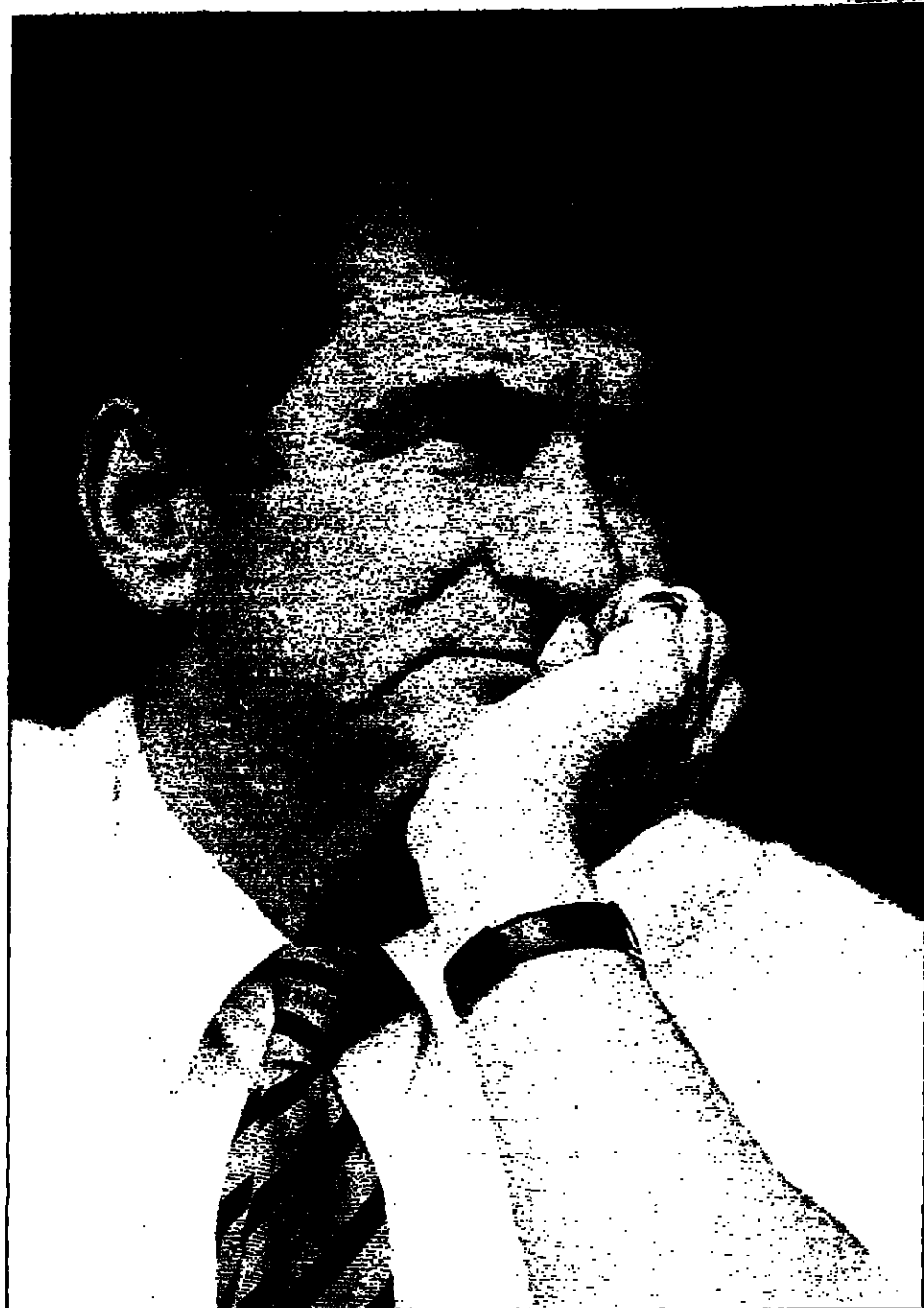
Yesterday, Anderton reiterated his unhappiness after playing in the reserves' 6-2

victory over Swindon Town. "I just want to play," he said, and no doubt Steven Iversen, who scored a hat-trick. Gary Mabbutt, David Howells, John Scales and Justin Edinburg were quick to add their personal frustrations after turning out for the second string in frozen Essex.

And so it will go on until May 10, when Tottenham play Southampton at home and try to secure their future in the FA Carling Premiership. Two points above the relegation zone with four games left, it promises to be a fraught few weeks. But then it has been a fraught season.

It was in mid-January that Pleat walked into this mansion as director of football, his job to try to peer through the storm that had already enveloped White Hart Lane, to try to bring long-term stability to a club lurching along on short-term decisions. How, though, do you draw up a five-year plan when the picture changes every five minutes?

"What is going on doesn't mean we can't plan for the future," Pleat said. "There have been certain players moaning about this and that and we can't talk about contracts until the season is sorted out. But it is my job to look



Pleat has to look beyond Tottenham's present problems and map out the future

beyond that." So while Gross frets over the next few weeks, Pleat is turning to the next few. "I am a director," he said. "I can walk through any door I like and sit in any dugout I like. But why should I if it's not

my job? I am not out to impose myself on anyone or intimidate anyone. I don't go to the dressing room. You see directors and chairmen scuttling down at a quarter to three as if they can make some change to the team. They go in there and

say: 'We've got to win this one today lads. The players know they've got to win.' Pleat's job is to help the manager find the players capable of achieving it and it is one he has thrown himself into with typical gusto. Not for him

‘I am not out to impose myself or intimidate anyone’

Koreans pledge to fulfil World Cup role

By Rob Hughes

SOUTH KOREA has reacted indignantly to suggestions that economic difficulties in Asia threaten the country's resolve to co-host the 2002 World Cup finals with Japan. There have been suggestions that England could be asked to step in.

"We intend to carry out the World Cup finals without a hitch by completing all the ten stadiums and accompanying facilities Fifa requires before the event in 2002," a government source assured The Times yesterday.

This pledge comes a week after 1,300 people demonstrated in Seoul in the wake of repeated public questioning of the high cost of building stadiums by the country's new president, Kim Dae-jung.

A leak from the Blue House, the presidential residence, had spoken of the president and prime minister proposing that South Korea, which recently negotiated a \$58.35 billion rescue package from the International Monetary Fund, "makes do with what stadiums we have".

Student protestors argued that the planned construction represented an investment for the future and would create 200,000 jobs.

After a week's deliberation, the country's London embassy, reacting to a report in The Times that England was ready in case South Korea and Japan could not afford to complete what they started, responded.

"In view of our economic difficulties, we have decided to put the planned construction of the main soccer stadium in Seoul on hold," the statement said. "Instead, a group of specialists is discussing two alternatives. One is to make use of the 69,811-seat Olympic Stadium in Chamshil, southern Seoul, and the other is to expand the Munsak Stadium, which is being built in Incheon, just west of Seoul."

"The Republic of Korea is already building stadiums in five large cities, in addition to Incheon. The construction of the rest of the planned stadiums will also begin in the second half of this year. The Republic of Korea has the will and is fully confident in its ability to host the event."

The message is that South Koreans are not about to lose face by giving up their World Cup. They will spend what it takes to build the arenas. They could, if relationships with North Korea improve, even stage games in Pyongyang. England would be better advised to spend time and money preparing to outbid Germany, South Africa, Brazil and any other contender for 2006.

Atletico look to Sacchi

By our sports staff

The defeat, 4-2 on aggregate, completed a melancholy hat-trick for Spartak. Their quest to become the first Russian team to win a European trophy has foundered at the same stage three times in the past seven years.

Inter, who lost to the German side Schalke 04 on penalties last year — when Ronaldo helped Barcelona win the European Cup Winners' Cup — will return to the final as favourites.

Argentina's preparations for the World Cup finals suffered an embarrassing setback yesterday when they lost 2-1 to Israel in Jerusalem. Argentina picked most of their first-choice players but were unable to break down the Israelis, who played for much

of the second half with 10 men. Haim Ravivo scored the decisive goal with seven minutes remaining to spark massive celebrations in the city. A month ago, in another warm-up match, Israel beat Romania 1-0 in Bucharest.

Israel took the lead in the 64th minute when Eyal Berkovic, the West Ham United player, set up Najjan Geravi, but had Yossi Abucassis sent off shortly after. Cagna equalised for Argentina in the 67th minute, and the South Americans dominated before Ravivo caught their goalkeeper, German Burgos, off his line and thumped in a free kick from 35 metres.

The Argentina coach, Daniel Passarella, said that it was "not the time to blame anybody."

Clubs profit in final flurry

By Richard Hobson

THE lure of Wembley as a national stadium will be underlined on Sunday when more than 60,000 people travel to watch the final of the Auto Windscreens Shield. Grimsby Town and Bournemouth are making their first appearance behind the Twin Towers and supporters are coming out of their armchairs in droves.

Grimsby have so far sold 28,000 of their allocation of 31,000 tickets and Bournemouth, who almost folded last year, have 3,500 of their original 37,000 remaining. To put the final into context, Grimsby failed to attract 8,000 spectators to Blundell Park when they were third in the first division three seasons ago and just 3,404 turned out to see Bournemouth's home win against Walsall on Tuesday.

"A lot of people see it as a

day out at Wembley rather than the Auto Windscreens Shield final," Tony Richardson, the Grimsby commercial manager, said. "I cannot think it would happen at any other ground." The club expects to make around £500,000 from its run in the competition.

Bournemouth are launching a new strip and have budgeted for an overall win bonus package of £100,000. The players can look forward to a holiday in the United States at the end of the season.

"It is a reward for putting up with all of the problems in terms of struggling to survive," Trevor Watkins, the chairman since June last year, said. "We were losing £80,000 a month; now we are making £15,000 a month. We already

have as many points as last season with three games to play and our best players are on long-term contracts. Sunday is the final nail in the coffin of the past."

Ironically, having waited 75 years to go to Wembley, both clubs could return on May 24 for the Nationwide League play-off final. Grimsby are still fourth, despite a run of six games without a win, and Bournemouth moved to ninth by beating Walsall 1-0.

Queens Park Rangers, too, will be pleased to find themselves in the first division next season. Their 1-1 draw against Oxford United on Tuesday night, secured by a goal in the eightieth minute by Kevin Gallen, means they are four points clear of the relegation zone with three games left.

FOR THE RECORD

CRICKET

Triangular tournament One-day international Pakistan v Sri Lanka

BASEBALL

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Boston 8 Oakland 6; Baltimore 4 Chicago White Sox 2; Cleveland 5 Seattle 3; Minnesota 8 Tampa Bay 2; Toronto 5 Kansas City 1; Texas 11 Detroit 2

BASKETBALL

BUBBLES CHAMPIONSHIP: Play-offs, first leg: Manchester Giants 86 Greater London Lynx 58; Second leg: Sheffield Sharks 75 Thames Valley Tigers 97

FOOTBALL

UEFA Cup: Semi-finals, second leg: Lazio 74 not out, K Nwani 52 not out v Oxford University No play yesterday; Leicester City 3 Southampton 3

OTHER SPORT

MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division north: Huddersfield v Brackley Sports

FOOTBALL

UEFA Cup: Semi-finals, second leg: Lazio 74 not out, K Nwani 52 not out v Oxford University No play yesterday; Leicester City 3 Southampton 3

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE

First division: Queens Park Rangers 1 Oxford United 1; Second division: Bournemouth 1 Walsall 0; Luton Town 3 Chesterfield 0

EUROPEAN CUP

Inter Milan 2 Bayern Munich 1; Arsenal 2 Tottenham 1; Liverpool 2 Borussia Dortmund 1

CRICKET

University matches: Second day of three: Fenner's Northamptonshire 125-3 v Cambridge University No play yesterday

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GOLF

COPT HEATH, Solihull: McEvoy Trophy: Early leading 18-hole scores: 72: D Giffins (West Herts); 73: L Nash (Gloucester); 74: N Burrows (Northamptonshire); J Eason (Kent); A Payne (St Mellors); J York (Surrey); P Whiston (Worcesters); D Barton (Gloucesters); 75: A Costello (Lancashire); A Smith (Essex); J Ross (North Hants); S Gray (Sussex); C Heywood (Keele); G East and W Burton (Suffolk); R Jones (Woodstock); G Harris (Hereford); J Glover (Northampton); N Dougherty (Shropshire); M Nestor (Gloucesters); A Beeson (Wiltshire); K Hale (South Stafford); J Pembury (Durham); 77: I Campbell (Hilton Park); G Edwards (Swansea Bay); 78: J Holloway (Worcesters); D Wood (Scotland); P Threl (Essex); A Serrano (Spain); Whitthouse (Worcesters); 79: S Randall (Woodstock Park)

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Ottawa 3 Florida 2; Washington 3 New York Rangers 1; Phoenix 2 Detroit 1

RUGBY LEAGUE

NATIONAL CONFERENCE LEAGUE: First division: East 18 Wigan 13; St. Joe's 6; Eastmoor 0; Oulton 20

TENNIS

BARCELONA: Conde de Godo tournament: Second round: A Gauband (n) vs W Fenner (GB) 4-6, 6-1, 6-2; S Bruggan (Sp) vs E Alvarez (Sp) 7-6, 6-0; Q Munoz (Sp) vs P Claret (Sp) 6-4, 6-2; F Delwa (US) vs J Terrazo (US) 6-4, 7-5; C Costa (Sp) vs G Kuersten (Sp) 6-4, 6-3; S Dossedel (CZ) vs F Canalis (Sp) 6-4, 7-6; U Linnich (CZ) vs R Carmona (Sp) 6-2, 6-1; M Sainz (Spain) vs J Hovick (CZ) 6-6, 6-3; 7-6; C Moya (Sp) vs T Carmona (Sp) 6-2, 6-2; 6-2; D Hruza (Slovakia) vs K Kucera (Slovakia) 7-4, 6-2; T Mann (US) vs T Muzar (Austria) 6-4, 7-6; M Gustafsson (Swe) vs K Alami (Mor) 6-0, 6-1

TENNIS

Henman sees chance to exact revenge

By Julian Muscat, Tennis Correspondent

TIM HENMAN, who reached the third round of the Japan Open in Tokyo yesterday by beating Daniel Nestor, has the opportunity to avenge his humiliating defeat by Jerome Golmard at the Australian Open in January. Henman plays Golmard, of France, who inflicted a first-round defeat on the Briton in Melbourne, for a place in the quarter-finals.

Nestor was dismissed routinely by Henman, who is seeded No 3 in this weakly-contested event. Henman sealed his 6-2, 7-5 triumph with an ace after breaking the Canadian to lead 6-5 in the second set.

Henman's prospects of a third career title advanced considerably when Pat Rafter, the No 1 seed and his projected semi-final opponent, lost 6-3, 7-6 to Brian MacPhie, who is world ranked No 181. Rafter could not handle MacPhie's booming service.

Other seeds making early departures included Thomas Johansson, who was seeded No 4. Vince Spadea, at No 5, Kenneth Carlsen, at No 8, and Arnaud Clement, the No 15 seed.

"There is a long way to go, but I think I have a good chance of winning the title," Henman said. The Briton is world-ranked No 15, one place below his career-high ranking. He could advance beyond that landmark by winning the tournament.

Lurking in the opposite half of the draw is Michael Chang, seeded No 2, who advanced to the third round when beating John van Lottum, of Holland, 6-4, 6-1.

Danny Sapsford joined Chris Wilkinson and Andrew Richardson among the Britons to fall in the first round. Sapsford trailed 7-5, 1-0 against Satoshi Iwabuchi before injury forced his retirement.

Advertisement for Continental tires. It features a large image of a tire tread pattern and the text: 'A PARTICULARLY GRIPPING MATCH.' Below the image is the Continental logo and the text 'Continental'. To the right, there is a partial view of a tennis racket and a tennis ball. The background is dark with some light patterns.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page. It features a large, stylized image of a tennis racket and a tennis ball. The text includes 'RUGBY UNION', 'Crowd rec under-se', 'FREE £10 B', '0800 44', and 'WILLIAMS'. The background is dark with some light patterns.

RUGBY UNION: SMALL STADIUMS MEAN CLUBS LOSE REVENUE

Crowd record supports under-selling theory

THE ability of Saracens to create a new attendance record for league rugby in England on Sunday, when they meet Newcastle in a top-of-the-table All-Ireland Premiership clash at Watford, only serves to emphasise how the development of the club game is being restrained by small stadia and a lack of facilities.

The match between the top two in the first division has created a sell-out figure of 19,700 in an area that, before this season, was a relative rugby desert. The capacity at Vicarage Road for a football match is 22,000, but, for safety reasons, Saracens are obliged to operate at a 10 per cent lower figure because they sell "rover" tickets in three of the four stands rather than designated seats.

Saracens will name their team today and can select from a full-strength squad, with the obvious exception of Richard Hill, the England flanker, who is recovering from a back operation. Newcastle, whose fly half, Rob Andrew, and centre, Va'auga Tuigamala, both suffered calf injuries during the defeat of Gloucester on Saturday, are not expected to confirm their line-up until the weekend for a match that will be refereed by the experienced Yorkshire official, Stewart Perry.

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

highest attendance figure, at just under 17,000, since Welford Road was and remains the biggest purpose-built rugby venue outside Twickenham. Now that ground-sharing schemes have come into operation, however, Saracens can overtake that, as could Wasps at Loftus Road if they had been able to attract similar crowds as a result of their league success last season.

In that respect, Saracens have run a remarkable marketing operation, directed by Peter Deakin, their commercial manager, who, when he worked in rugby league for Bradford Bulls, recorded a highest attendance of 18,500 for a home fixture with Wigan.

"I'm sure that, for some of the bigger games, the clubs are short-selling themselves because of their facilities," Deakin said.

"Bath could probably have sold 14,000 for their game with us last Friday, but they can only cope with just over 8,000, they have to look after their own members and we wound up with only 200 tickets to sell to our members. But the way we are going, towards Super 12 standards or better, we have to drive the revenue base up and to do that we have to have the stadiums."

Ironically, Bristol have a stadium capable of holding a five-figure crowd, but their position at the foot of the table has left the Memorial Ground

half-empty far too frequently this season. There was optimism on a separate issue after their board meeting yesterday, however, that agreement could be reached with the dozen players whose contracts end this season, among them Robert Jones and Paul Burke, the international half backs. Two backs, Simon Martin and Dean Dewdney, have already indicated their willingness to accept Bristol's present offer.

"It's understandable that players want time to think, given the uncertainty about our position, whether there will be relegation or not," Fred Howard, the Bristol commercial manager, said. "There's no deadline, but we do need to know from the players or their agents relatively quickly whether they can agree terms because players are coming on to the market in whom we would be interested if we had to move for replacements."

The Scotland party to tour Australia and Fiji this summer will be 35-strong, the majority of whom will come from the 63 home-based players who were told yesterday that they still have a future as full-time rugby players within the new super district organisations. It was clearly an emotional day for those involved, among them Scott Hastings, the 33-year-old record cap-holder, who had feared the worst when it was announced that the Scottish Rugby Union would be halving their playing staff.

At the other end of the scale were men like Graham Ellis, of Currie, and Jim Hay, of Hawick. Both hookers have been involved in senior national squads this season, yet they have missed out and the initial reaction from the two men was to consider whether they have any future in the game at senior level.

GLASGOW/LEEDS: Backs: G. Bennett (Glasgow), A. Bull (Leeds), J. Clegg, F. Scott (all West of Scotland), T. Hayes, G. MacLellan, C. Simmens, D. Stark (all Glasgow), M. Jenkins, J. White (all North of Scotland), G. Longstaff (Dundee HSFP), D. Officer (Currie), D. Patterson (Leeds), J. Shepherd (Leeds), J. Forwards: W. Anderson, G. Simpson (both Kilmarnock), G. Bulloch, G. Penne, J. Shaw (all Glasgow), G. White (all West of Scotland), S. Smith, R. Wainwright (all Dundee HSFP), G. Proctor, A. Kettle, K. McKenzie (all Strathclyde), G. Givens, M. Wells, J. White (all West of Scotland), G. MacKay, G. McIlwain (both Glasgow).

DUNDEE/SCOTISH BORDERS: Backs: G. Burns, S. Hastings, D. Hodge, J. Kerr, J. Meyer (all West of Scotland), C. Chalmers (Dunfermline), G. Currie (all Scotland), G. Common (Glasgow Hawks), I. Farley (Dunfermline), R. Glasgow (all Scotland), J. Murray, J. Shepherd (Leeds), J. Forwards: W. Anderson, G. Simpson (both Kilmarnock), S. Brotherton, G. Hogg, G. Proctor, A. Kettle, K. McKenzie (all Strathclyde), G. Givens, M. Wells, J. White (all West of Scotland), G. MacKay, G. McIlwain (both Glasgow).

Scotland lose Newcastle quintet for summer tour

BY KEVIN FERRIE

SCOTLAND will be without the entire five-man contingent from Newcastle that took part in the recent Five Nations Championship, including Gary Armstrong, the captain, when they tour Australia and Fiji this summer. Also missing will be Tony Stanger, the wing, who equalled the 50-year-old national try-scoring record of Ian Smith against England last month.

In something of a triumph for quiet diplomacy, after Northampton's failed attempt to prevent their players from doing national service this summer, the Newcastle quintet have dealt individually with Jim Telfer, the national coach. Daddie Weir paved the way two weeks ago, when he visited Murrayfield to put his case to Telfer and Newcastle's



Tuigamala, left, and Andrew both have calf injuries

demanding season has clearly been taken into consideration. "Peter Walton, George Graham and Daddie Weir have been carrying injuries that we knew about and it was always touch and go whether they would be available or not," Telfer explained. "We decided they would be better resting over the summer."

"Gary Armstrong has already played over 40 games this season. He came in to see me earlier this week and I agreed that he would be better taking the summer out. Alan Tait has played virtually non-stop for two years. Once again, in the interests of his longer-term fitness, we agreed that he should not go to Australia," Stanger, whose

wife is due to give birth to their first child this summer, was released for "family reasons". Previously, Telfer had indicated that there might be problems in Australia if Scotland travelled at less than full strength, but he clearly anticipates no such difficulty as a result of these high-profile withdrawals.

"Obviously, it is a blow to lose players of that calibre from what is going to be a very tough tour, but the tour will go ahead and the opportunity arises for young players to make their mark," Telfer said.

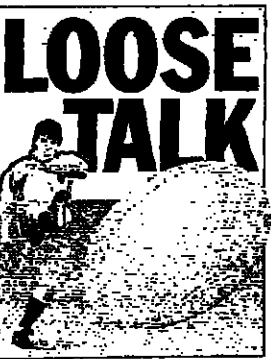
Michael Brial, the New South Wales Waratahs captain, has recovered from a virus and will be fit for the Super 12 match with Queensland Reds on Saturday.

European integration moves to forefront of the clubs' agenda

WILL the leading clubs be prepared to reconsider their boycott of Europe? That issue will be high on the agenda of the talks between the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and the clubs that began yesterday. It appears that the clubs will reconsider, provided they have greater control over the competition. If that can be agreed, then it is likely that plans to expand the All-Ireland Dunbar Premiership will be shelved.

Heineken, the sponsor of the European Cup, is still committed to the competition. However, a fresh look at the unloved European Conference — which is unsponsored — could also be considered. One incentive to breathe new life into the Conference could be to ensure that the winners automatically qualify for the Heineken Cup the following year.

Heineken are backing a new award to recognise six of the best rugby players in Europe. The "Heineken Awards for European Rugby" will be presented for the first time at a ceremony in London on May 18. A panel of 15 judges will nominate the six (who will each receive £3,000), with the outright winner awarded



a trophy and a further prize of £5,000.

Fez on the beat

May the fez be with you! The Chief Constable of Herefordshire is allowing off-duty officers at Vicarage Road on Sunday for the top-of-the-table Premiership meeting between Saracens and Newcastle to wear a blue fez. Up to 150 policemen will be donning the distinctive headgear that Saracens supporters have made their own this season. The "Fez Boys" themselves are planning on bringing fishing tackle to the game... after Fran Cotton's threat to use his rods more in future after his recent resignation from the management board of the RFU.

Thinking big

An RFU mole reports that Clive Woodward, the England coach, is apparently unhappy with the size of his office at Twickenham. He recently requested something bigger "appropriate to his status". Money certainly seems to be no object for England at the moment. The players touring the southern hemisphere this summer have been trying out blazers costing £500 each, while a management team of 19 went to Paris for the opening game in the Five Nations Championship.

Ponty pride

We've heard of moving the goalposts, but this is ridiculous. Jonathan Humphreys, the former Wales captain, is determined that the men in red will meet England on a level playing field next season — Pontypridd's Sardis Road ground. The international is due to be staged at Wembley, but Humphreys said: "We cannot afford to give England any advantage. Sardis Road would be an intimidating arena for them and I think the WRU

should go for it." Such a move would draw a 15,000 crowd compared to 75,000 at Wembley and cost around £1 million, but Humphreys argued: "What is the hidden cost of the result against France?"

England isn't the only country suffering from possible withdrawals from their summer tour party. Va'auga Tuigamala has pulled out of the Western Samoa trip to New Zealand. One wonders what Pat Lam, his captain and a club colleague at Newcastle, thinks.

Junior turn

Having invested an impressive £12 million in professional rugby, Allied Dunbar, sponsors of the Premiership, are dipping their toes into junior rugby by sponsoring a pre-season tournament at Chipping Norton Rugby Club on September 20. The presence of international players is guaranteed and the club hopes to raise enough money to subsidise the cost of a junior team attending the festival of rugby at Murrayfield next year.

MARK SOUSTER



Lomas is retiring after 16 years of international table tennis competition

Lomas hopes to bow out by putting England on a high

As a nine-year-old, watching her sister at the local youth club in Dunstable, Lisa Lomas was happy to call it ping-pong. Within a year, she had picked up her own bat and become England's No 1 table tennis player in her age group. Next week in Holland, at the European championships, Lomas, now 31 and still England's top-ranked player, will compete for the last time.

"My aim is to go out having made sure that we stay in the top category," she said. "We lost to Sweden last month, which meant that England were relegated from the European Superleague to the first division, so I'm desperate for the team to do well in these championships."

According to Lomas, there are around 200,000 players affiliated to the English Table Tennis Association (ETTA), but a professional career is rare. "I've managed it, but mainly because I've found my own sponsors," she said. "It's very difficult for the youngsters because, unless you are a top European player, you won't get a good offer from a foreign club."

Lomas plays in the German Bundesliga, where the standard is the highest in Europe and appearance fees and prize-money reflect the interest. "A lot of the Chinese players go there to live and play, which is why it's so much better," she said.

The International Table Tennis Federation runs a professional tour, which is probably quite similar to tennis, where there are events all over the world. At some of those, the women's singles title could earn you £4,000, but because the Chinese compete in all of them, the chances of winning are pretty much zero. In China, it seems like it's a big ambition to be good at table tennis because they get fantastic opportunities compared with the everyday person."

Lomas is looking forward to becoming an everyday person. Professional table tennis may have given her a passport to see the world, but it has meant living away from home for five months every year.

"That gets pretty demanding," she said. "It's one of the reasons I'm packing it in, because when you're away that long the motivation does go. I do want to live a bit of a normal life where I'll be at home at weekends and can go

SARAH POTTER



out with my friends. Also, I have got a husband to think about." Her husband, Steve, keeps goal for Aylesbury United.

"He's a sportsman, so he understands," she said, "but because he runs his own printing business, he can't travel with me, and I suppose

it's just got to the stage where we both fed up with it."

The ETTA is relieved that Lomas is tired of the travelling rather than the game and is negotiating a part-time coaching role for the country's premier player. She said: "Lottery funding of £1.28 million means that the sport can now make long-term plans. It will help the current players, but it also means that, in about six years' time, we'll have the next batch capable of competing in the major events."

It is likely that Lomas will be working with the under-12 and under-14 age groups. "When I was that age, there wasn't the funding there is now," she said. "It is so exciting for these youngsters and I'm ready to put something back into the sport."

In addition to her work with the governing body, she might be given the opportunity to develop the purpose-built centre in Milton Keynes, a move that reinforces the thought that Lomas's imminent retirement might offer a new beginning to her sport.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Vazquez in walkout as Hamed is late

BOXING: Wilfredo Vazquez walked out of a planned meeting with Naseem Hamed yesterday after the British boxer turned up 70 minutes late, claiming that his car had broken down. Vazquez, who takes on the World Boxing Organisation featherweight champion in Manchester on Saturday, waited 40 minutes before leaving.

An angry Vazquez, 36, of Puerto Rico, said: "He tried to stop me concentrating, he's showing me disrespect. This kind of thing has never happened to me before."

DRUGS IN SPORT: Blood tests are unlikely to be used to help catch drug cheats at the 2000 Olympic Games, a leading official said in Sydney yesterday. Kevan Gosper, the senior Australian member of the International Olympic Committee, said it had yet to be proved that they added to the accuracy of urine-testing. "That is why there's a reluctance to introduce them, but if that position changes we will be the first to fall into line," he said.

CRICKET: Sri Lanka scored a 115-run win over Pakistan at Willowmoore Park in Benoni yesterday to play themselves back into contention for a place in the final of the triangular limited-overs series, which also features South Africa. The victory enabled Sri Lanka to draw level with Pakistan in the round-robin standings. Both sides have two wins from five matches.

TENNIS: The Great Britain Fed Cup team have no chance of qualifying for the world group this year after they were beaten 2-0 by Poland, their second defeat in two successive days, at La Manga, Spain yesterday. Britain can now finish no higher than third in pool B of Europe-Africa group one.

CYCLING: Johan Museeuw, of Belgium, will not ride again before the world championships in Holland in October. Patrick Lefevre, the Mapei team manager, said yesterday, Museeuw, the 1996 world road race champion and World Cup-winner, was taken back to hospital after the broken kneecap that he sustained in the Paris-Roubaix one-day classic on Sunday became infected. "He'll be back. He's as strong as a lion," Lefevre said.

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Simon Wilde predicts the finishing order for the 1998 Britannic Assurance county championship

Lara should provide the impetus for Warwickshire

1st WARWICKSHIRE
Have taken a risk by handing the captaincy to Brian Lara... There is an impressive quartet of all-rounders...



It will be a tough task for Steve James and Glamorgan to remain on high after their 1997 championship triumph

14th SOMERSET
Some counties would die for the talent Somerset have enjoyed in recent years... Ecclestone is developing nicely...

2nd KENT
Runners-up in three of the four competitions last year... Kent must convince themselves that they can go a step further...

6th ESSEX
A force to be reckoned with in the one-day cups and championships... Hussain's England absences should create opportunities...

10th GLOUCESTERSHIRE
Gloucestershire are rarely seduced by glamour... Gloucestershire are rarely seduced by glamour as they showed by retaining Alleyne...

16th SUSSEX
What would happen were Sussex to have a season as pitiful as last is hard to contemplate... Sussex is a former performer...

3rd LEICESTERSHIRE
Leicestershire's claim that the championship nose-dive from first to tenth place last year was chiefly because of miserable luck... batting and the seam and swing bowling looks strong...

7th GLAMORGAN
Do not rush to put money on Glamorgan retaining the championship... Glamorgan may be less fireproof in the one-day competitions...

11th LANCASHIRE
Lancashire, who have not always been as good as they thought they were... Lancashire's prospects, of course, have been enhanced by their two Test captains...

18th DURHAM
David Boon's mission to restore morale appears to be having the desired effect... Durham possess more talent than their results suggest...

4th MIDDLESEX
Even as they rebuild, Middlesex look a class act... Middlesex look a class act and any side containing Ramprakash, Gattling, Fraser and Tunelli...

8th NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Watching Nottinghamshire in the championship of late has required the patience of Job... Nottinghamshire is less experienced or accurate but should be an improvement on Mohammad Akram...

12th NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
Two mediocre seasons after the heart-stopping championship chase of 1995 have driven Northamptonshire to drastic action... Northamptonshire is less experienced or accurate but should be an improvement on Mohammad Akram...

17th HAMPSHIRE
The only side except Durham to have finished in the bottom six of the championship every year since 1993... Hampshire may fill Hayden's shoes and open with Lane and they, along with Smith...

5th SURREY
On paper, Surrey are the strongest side in the championship... Surrey are the strongest side in the championship. Sadly for them, it is played on grass...

9th YORKSHIRE
Possessed with perhaps the biggest hang-up of any county about their recent failure to win trophies... Yorkshire is a fine, aggressive batsman and Blythe's approach is always positive...

13th WORCESTERSHIRE
Will do well to finish as high in the championship as they did last year... Worcestershire will do well to finish as high in the championship as they did last year, when a late charge into third place owed much to a knack of trouncing the weakest sides...

19th DERBYSHIRE
Rivalled Sussex for disarray and defeat last year - and at least the fighting at Hove was finished before the season began... Derbyshire won only eight matches against county opposition last year and Adams and Malcolm had a hand in most...

Malcolm and Rose hold key for Curran... Connect now from Free... Advertisement for Curran and Rose.

Malcolm and Rose hold key for Curran

By IVO TENNANT

A DAY without play at Fenner's did at least afford Kevin Curran, the new captain of Northamptonshire, the opportunity to have another discussion with his players about his hopes and ambitions for the season. To a great extent, these depend on the fitness and effectiveness of Devon Malcolm and Franklyn Rose, the new opening attack.

Malcolm, 35, who left Derbyshire last autumn, was attracted to Northamptonshire in part because his new-ball partner was to have been Paul Reiffel, of Australia. However, he is having a shoulder operation and Curtly Ambrose, whom Curran would have liked, took the view that he would have no energy left for Test cricket if he returned to the county game.

"So Curtly recommended Rose as the overseas bowler most likely to succeed in county cricket," Curran said. "He bowls a slightly fuller length than the majority of West Indians and swings the ball. He is also very fit and John Emburey, our coach, who watched him in the Caribbean, believes he can take in excess of 60 championship wickets."

"If he manages that and Devon achieves 75, as he did last year, then we are clearly going to bowl sides out. I shall be discussing with our groundsmen the need to play on pitches which have a bit of bounce in them. We won't be helped by playing on flat surfaces," Curran said.

"I did not know Devon well before he joined us on our pre-season tour of Zimbabwe. His whole attitude there was fantastic and he is a lot fitter than most people give him credit for. I told him that, in the heat, I did not want him to bowl too much, but he had a net for 40 minutes and then requested another one."

"He wants to play as much as he can and so I shall look to him to take part in most of the matches, including the Sunday League. At this stage of my career, I need to do more than bat and bowl and, having led Natal and Boland a few times, I am greatly looking forward to taking on the captaincy."

Pat Gibson meets Sussex's costly and outspoken new captain

Adams needs to give value for money

Chris Adams, who became the highest-paid English player in county cricket when he joined Sussex from Derbyshire at the end of last season, has a ready answer for people who think that he is only at Hove for the money. Nottinghamshire, he says, offered him even more than the £200,000 that Sussex are reputed to be paying him over the next three years, but he turned them down.

His reasons for doing so tell you much about the man. "Notts came in with a fantastic offer and I would be lying if I said that I was not tempted," he said, "but I just felt that I was not their No 1 choice. They had already plumped for Jason Gallian and whatever they said to me after that I felt that I wanted to play somewhere where they actually wanted me."

"When I spoke to Tony Pigott, the chief executive of Sussex, it was very obvious that this was a club desperately in need of success, desperate to get the right people in the right kind of positions and everything felt right."

On top of that, they were offering the captaincy and Adams admitted: "I would not have come if it had not been for that. It gave me the challenge I was looking for to fulfil the next stage of my career. I saw a club which had got as low as it could possibly get in the last two or three years and was in the process of being revolutionised and rebuilt. The whole set-up seemed right for me to come here."

Obviously he has a high opinion of his own worth and that was probably at the root of his problems with Derbyshire, which finally came to a head last summer when the Australians, Dean Jones and Les Stillman, captain and coach respectively, left the club amid much acrimony and Adams found himself isolated in the dressing-room.

"It was time to move on," he said. "I just felt that I had done as much as I could do for them and for myself in those circumstances. I had reached a level where the only way I could continue at Derbyshire was by being captain."

"I was offered the job, but I made it clear what would happen if I took it and the offer was retracted. I felt that certain players would leave if I was captain and I had a list of certain players who I did not want at the club. Both groups would probably have been the same anyway."

It says as much for the scarcity of batting talent in England as it does for Adams's own ability that



Adams, who has taken on greater responsibilities at county level, still hopes for an England chance

when Derbyshire eventually agreed to let him go, there was such a scramble to sign him. After all, he had never played for England, he had scored 1,000 runs in a season only three times and his first-class average is a modest 36, yet he had offers from Warwickshire and Kent as well as Nottinghamshire and Sussex. "It was nice that so many clubs expressed an interest in me and that obviously had an effect on the kind of contract I could command. I said initially that the one county I would really like to play for was Yorkshire and they were one of the few who did not come in, so you

don't always get your own way." Not that Adams is complaining. He has got just about everything else he wanted. Ask him about his contract and he says: "It's very nice, thank you. I did have a little chuckle about all the figures that were bandied about

because it was quite interesting to see how much variation there was, but I'm not going to deny that I have got a very good package."

What has surprised him is the resentment it seems to have stirred up in some quarters. "I am very aware that there are quite a few jealous people around," he said, "and that I cannot understand. I would have thought that what I have done is good for the other players."

"Obviously players, especially England players, are going to use me as an example and say: 'How come he's paid more than I am, when he's never played international cricket?' I would say: 'By all means use me as an example to better yourselves, but don't put me down.' I think that clubs have got away with paying players poorly in the past and I hope this does some good."

Warne at risk of lengthy lay-off

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

SHANE WARNE said yesterday that he is resigned to undergoing a shoulder operation that could rule him out of a three-Test series in Pakistan later this year.

Warne will play against India and New Zealand in a limited-overs tournament, which starts tomorrow in Sharjah, before returning home for exploratory surgery during the off-season.

"Obviously it's a last resort," he said. "I don't want an operation, but I'll have to have it. Hopefully they will just need to scrape a few things out, but I think it might be a bit worse; we'll just have to wait and see."

Warne sustained ligament damage in his right shoulder while fielding during a limited-overs match against Zimbabwe in India on Saturday.

Errol Alcott, the Australian team physiotherapist, has said that Warne could be sidelined for more than four months if he has sustained tendon damage in the joint.

Australia are scheduled to play three Test matches during a tour of Pakistan between late September and early November.

Speaking in Dubai on his way to Sharjah, Warne said that the injury was preventing him from throwing the ball while fielding. "I don't want to play the rest of my career not being able to bowl big leg breaks whenever I want, and I want to be able to throw again," he said.

Warne said that he had been troubled by shoulder soreness for the past 18 months, a problem that has required regular physiotherapy. "It's not ideal [playing in Sharjah], but the shoulder has been sore for 18 months and this problem has just made it a bit worse," he said.

"There is so much cricket these days, however, that you just have to put up with injuries unless they are so bad that you can't physically bowl."

■ Ireland have selected Neil Johnson, a South African who played for Leicestershire last season, as their overseas player for the Benson and Hedges Cup. Ireland have been drawn against Glamorgan, Essex, Middlesex and Sussex.

Obviously he has a high opinion of his own worth

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Now, of course, Adams has to prove that he can provide value for money. "When I first thought of leaving Derbyshire, I never had any captaincy inclinations at all," he said. "My sole ambition was to play for England and that is still my driving force, but now I have 25 other people to think about and I'm enjoying every minute of it."

"It's something that I am hoping will benefit me in my own game now that I am batting not just for myself but for the whole club."

Early start for endurance test

WELCOME to the start of the 1998 cricket season. If April 14 seemed unseasonably early, then that is because it was. Time was when there were few, if any, county matches in April: this year, there will have been 44 come May — and that does not include university engagements. It is not quite the earliest start to a season, though. In 1903, it began a day earlier than this and April 13 starts have recurred several times since.

The opening of the Britannic Assurance county championship tomorrow will be a record, however, beating by three days the start made in 1989. This season could also be the longest in history if it lasts until its final scheduled day on September 20. That makes 156 days from first to last. Whoever wins it will need stamina, if nothing else.



New school ties

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is doing its homework before setting up its national academy. The plans are being laid by Hugh Morris, the ECB's new technical director, and he has taken care to pick the brains of the man who set up the Australian model in Adelaide ten years

ago. "I have had a couple of recent talks with Hugh," Jack Potter, the inaugural head coach of the revered hot-house in Adelaide, said.

"There have been so many false starts that he is anxious that it should now be done correctly. We had all sorts of parochial problems to start with, with fathers in Queensland and New South Wales reluctant to send their sons to Adelaide. The ECB is very keen for the thing to take off."

Potter, 60, is in England again this summer, working as a freelance consultant in Oxfordshire, teaching his innovative methods at schools to both pupils and masters. Among the gadgets he has brought with him are a harness to help bowlers keep their bodies in line at delivery and a ball hung on a fibreglass frame to encourage batsmen

to hit the ball straight. Coaching a county, Potter said, would be "the ultimate".

Two counties may have a vital edge over their rivals. Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire are rumoured to be the lucky sides drawn at random to test a high-tech videotape analysis system that enables them to study technique — their own and the opposition's. If the pilot scheme is a success, the ECB may give wider distribution to the system, which is devised by Castle Sport & Leisure. It has been used by David Lloyd, the England coach, for the past year.

Worth an appeal

One of the most important cricket grounds in the world will be restored to its former glory if an appeal, led by luminaries such as Sir Garfield Sobers, Lord Cowdrey of Tonbridge, Richie Benaud, David Gower and John Major, achieves its aims. Broadhalfpenny Down at Hambledon, where the great players met to do battle in the second half of the 18th century but unused for most of the 19th, will receive a magnificent new pavilion, plus water and electricity supplies, next year if the Broadhalfpenny Down Association succeeds in raising £100,000. The ground would be used to foster the game and support charities. The appeal is being organised by Peter Tuke (01750 825711).

Spring roll

Many people view the beginning of the cricket season as a sign that spring has sprung. Put some of them on the boundary's edge, let them smell freshly-cut grass and listen to the birds sing and they will be in heaven.

To set them on their way, here is an XI worthy of gracing the most sylvan setting: M A Roseberry (Durham), A J Swann (Northamptonshire), A Dale (Glamorgan), T A Tweats (Derbyshire), R J Warren (Northamptonshire), G D Rose (Somerset), P J Martin (Lancashire), R J Green (Lancashire), C E W Silverwood (Yorkshire), J P Hart (Nottinghamshire), T F Bloomfield (Middlesex). Umpires, naturally, Bird and Shepherd.

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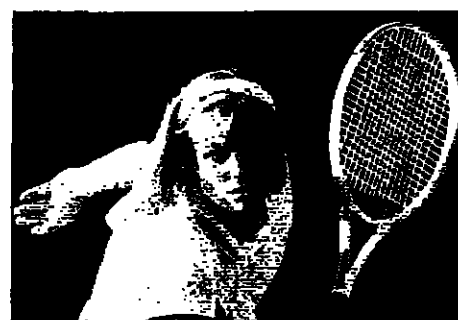
THE TIMES

FREE TENNIS FOR EVERY READER

Today The Times offers every reader the chance to enjoy a FREE tennis session at one of more than 70 independent clubs across the country. The offer, which entitles you and a partner to FREE use of a tennis court for up to an hour, could save you as much as £15 and is valid until Saturday May 30, 1998. A full list of participating clubs, many normally open only to members, appeared on Monday.

HOW TO APPLY

Book your session in advance and attach three differently numbered tokens from The Times, plus the token in this Sunday's Style section of The Sunday Times, to the voucher to be published again on Saturday. Present the voucher and tokens at the club of your choice on the day of your visit.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS 1 Your free visit must be booked in advance by telephone directly with one of the participating clubs quoting The Times offer. 2 Each voucher is only valid for two people making one free visit. 3 No photocopies of tokens or vouchers will be accepted. 4 The offer is valid until Saturday May 30, 1998, and is subject to availability. 5 The offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer and entitles you to one visit to the club only. 6 Check at the time of booking exactly what is included in the offer as some sessions may vary in duration. Doubles may be available at the club's discretion.

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 - BEXHILL-ON-SEA Cooden Beach Sports Club 01424 844810. BOGNOR REGIS Bognor LTC 01243 863695. BROMLEY Bromley LTC 0181-460 0936.
 - CHICHESTER Chichester Lawn Tennis & Squash Club 01243 787269. CRAWLEY Copthorne The Club 01342 715022.
 - CROYDON Esporta Health & Racquets Club 0181 681 1331. GRAVESEND Gravesend LTC 01474 535411.
 - HEMEL HEMPSTEAD National & International Tennis Academy 01442 230234. HORSHAM Compton's TC 01403 263734. LEWES The Southdown Club 01273 480630. LONDON SE8 Blackheath TC 0171-240 7206.
 - LONDON SW18 Rocks Lane TC 0181-876 8330. LONDON W2 Carlton Tennis & Health Club 0171-286 1985.
 - LONDON W3 Acton LTC 0181-995 6215. LONDON W10 Westway TC 0181-969 0992. MAIDSTONE Avds Health & Fitness Club 01622 750007.
 - NEWBURY Greensacre Leisure 01635 41707. READING Hanover International Hotel & Club 0118-959 1885.
 - SLOUGH Slough TC 01753 875587.
 - ST ALBANS St Albans LTC 01727 839085. TUNBRIDGE WELLS Tunbridge Wells LTC 01892 525825.
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CHANGING TIMES

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Joggers are deserting polluted city streets for rural settings



The tranquillity and picturesque surroundings of trails such as Crawfordsburn Park are attracting hordes of former street pounders

Are we doing enough to keep our sportsmen off the streets? At this time of the year, you might feel that you cannot move for flocks of joggers tuning up for events such as the Flora London Marathon, pounding the pavements, the roads and the lanes of the land. Their slapping shoes will climax in a crescendo in ten days' time, when the streets will be shut to cars to let the runners strut their stuff for the television cameras.

But any exerciser, or would-be exerciser, who is daunted and baffled by the annual sight of thousands elbowing their way through sticky masses of exhausted bodies, will be relieved by a breath of fresh air coming out of Belfast today.

In Crawfordsburn Country Park, on the southern shores of Belfast Lough, a new running trail is being unveiled — a place where you will be coaxed to escape the concrete jungle for the secluded peace and the gentle joys of the great outdoors.

Trail running — simply padding through the countryside on footpaths with grass, sand or soil underfoot — is reckoned to be the fastest-growing sector in running at the moment and, like so many trends in physical fitness, it came out of the United States.

There, the jogging boom of the 1970s inspired a generation to take to the streets in search of health and fitness — and to make fortunes for the manufacturers of running shoes. The Americans pioneered the fun runs and the big city

Runners dash to join country club

marathons, but, eventually, too many got sick of bashing endlessly round the block and started taking to the hills and forests for a different kind of running.

Anyone who has shivered on a freezing wet afternoon in a school cross-country race knows that there is nothing very new about off-road running.

More than 130 years ago, packs of rowers from the Thames Rowing Club were running the trails of Wimbledon Common to keep themselves in shape and forming the world's first cross-country running club, the Thames Hare and Hounds, using paper chases to mark out their trails.

Now the joy of such a simple activity, reinvented and re-labelled in the United States, is the latest trend in Britain. The five-kilometre waymarked trail in Ulster, sponsored by Adidas and supported by *Runner's World* magazine, is one of a series of such projects aimed at changing the ethos of running.

"If you ask any runner, at any level, to name a favourite run, no one describes a road run," Paul Magner, of Adidas UK, said. "Everyone's favourite is a park or a path beside a

wandering river — something relaxed and enjoyable. The trail concept captures this spirit and can motivate lapsed runners or runners who are completely new to the sport to get out into the open air and enjoy the freedom of the countryside."

The trail running initiative was launched towards the end of last summer and Adidas made its first awards of up to £1,000 last Christmas. The first marked trail run was in Newport, Gwent, and others will soon follow Belfast with trails in Kettering, Burton-on-Trent, Wells in Somerset and Bridgend, Wales. Of course,

treadmills, high-tech gyms and leg-jarring road races in favour of more laid-back, away-from-it-all pursuits, such as mountain biking and forest running.

"Competitive events — marathons to mini-marathons — were hugely popular in the 1980s," Seaton said. "Just about every city in Britain had

an annual race at one time, but the number of events has dropped drastically in the past few years.

"In trail running, there are no barriers to entry and no objective criteria for success or failure. Natural ability and speed are of no consequence. All that is important is the will to run."

Seaton is convinced that the non-competitive ethos of trail running is one of its strongest attractions. "Because it has become so popular, we did a poll to see whether runners would be interested in progressing to trail events and competitions," he said. "The answer was a resounding 'No.' It is more about recharging your batteries while getting fit than running against the clock. Competition doesn't fit into the ethos."

The underlying appeal of trail running, according to Magner, is as gentle as the surface underfoot. "We see it as a leisure pursuit, part of an integrated lifestyle," he said. "We have helped with the presentation of the Belfast project, working with people in tourism, running clubs and even the local medical community. "We can see a time when local GPs might even prescribe some gentle jogging on one of these trails as a way to improve health."

Doctors' orders or not, from this week the runners of Northern Ireland will at least have one place where they can replace the aggression of the streets with the tranquillity of the trails.

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JOHN BRYANT

There are no barriers. All that is important is the will to run

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Castro in shape to end long-running record

IF Belayneh Dinsamo is planning a celebration tomorrow, the athletics world at large will not be present. The day marks the tenth anniversary of the Ethiopian's marathon world record, now the oldest surviving mark in any of the men's Olympic running events.

"We have tried to find him and we know he is somewhere in Ethiopia, but we could not find him," Caroline Feith, a spokeswoman for the Rotterdam Marathon, said yesterday. Given that Feith represents Haile Gebrselassie, the pride of Ethiopia, and has strong links with the national federation there, her failure suggested only one thing: that Dinsamo is tucked away in a remote village.

It was in Rotterdam that Dinsamo set his record and it is in Rotterdam that there is expectation of it being broken on Sunday. The organisers wanted Dinsamo present. Understandably, they want every party balloon in place if Domingos Castro, of Portugal, succeeds in his attempt to reaffirm Rotterdam as the course for world records.

Flora London Marathon officials will be waiting anxiously for news. Seven days after Rotterdam, London puts on to its streets an elite field costing more than £1 million. The aim is one world record, if not two. What London does not want is for Tegla Loroupe, in the women's race, or Castro, in the men's, to narrow the goalsposts by breaking those records a week too soon.

In Rotterdam last year, Loroupe and Castro were each 1min 15sec outside the world record. Now they are a year older, wiser and, in the case of

Castro certainly, fitter. Fifteenth in the world cross country championships last year, in the month before Rotterdam, he was ninth four weeks ago.

Castro has taken his own private pacemaker to Rotterdam, though it is by no means a one-man race. Fabian Roncero, from Spain, was one place behind him in the world cross country race and ran a fast 10,000 metres on April 4. Eric Kimayo, from Kenya, seven months after recording 2hr 7min 43sec in Berlin, is also present.

Dinsamo has won Rotterdam four times and any notion that he might have been too old to try for a fifth victory at 32 is nonsense. Castro is 34 and still has years ahead of him.

Carlos Lopes, Castro's countryman, was 38 when he ran a world record of 2hr 7min 12sec in 1985. Those were the days when men's marathon world records had a short life expectancy. The record was broken four times in the Eighties.

Only a fool would have put money on Dinsamo's record lasting. The late Eighties was a boom time for the marathon and, in the year Dinsamo set his world record, four men broke 2hr 8min. There has been a dearth of fast times in the Nineties, but now the event is picking up speed again at last.

The 1996 rankings showed only six athletes within two minutes of the world record. Last year, however, there were 21, 14 of them African. It is strange, then, that the record may now return into European hands.

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Chelsea vs vicenza from 7:30pm tonight

Answers from page 41

SEKERE (a) A Yoruba gourd-rattle. "The acrobatic dancers tour the Yoruba land. They have their beaters, and what they beat is called sekere. These are not drums, but gourds to which a number of cowries have been attached, so that they make a noise when shaken."

STAUNTON (b) The name of Howard Staunton (1810-74), English chess-player and writer. Hence an eponym used attributively and absolutely to designate chessmen of a design now accepted as standard. "The Staunton with its austere lack of pretension."

TUAN (c) A master, a lord, formerly especially a European as spoken to or of by Malays. Frequently used as a title of respect or form of address — sir or master.

UNBROTHEREN (a) Touch wood! In German "unauthorised, gratuitous".

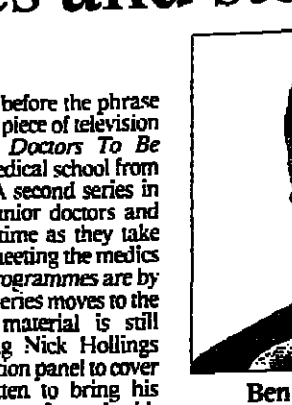
SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE 1. Rh8-Kxh8; 2. Qh6-Kg8; 3. Bf7-Kh8; 4. Bg6-Kg8; 5. Qg7-checkmate.

Tests, lies and stethoscopes

Doctors at Large BBC2, 9.00pm It was a documentary soap long before the phrase was coined and an unforgettable piece of television for anybody around in 1984. *Doctors To Be* followed ten students through medical school from selection board to final exams. A second series in 1992 caught up with them as junior doctors and now we meet them for a third time as they take stock of their careers. For those meeting the medics for the first time, the first three programmes are by way of a recap and after that the series moves to the present day. The 14-year-old material is still compelling, whether it is young Nick Hollings telling a whopping lie to the selection panel to cover up the fact that he has forgotten to bring his photographs, the students being confronted with their first corpse for dissection or Sarah Holdsworth learning that for the first time in her life she has failed an exam.

Horizon: The Curse of Vesuvius BBC2, 9.30pm Two million people live in Naples and the surrounding towns, in easy reach of a potential killer. Admittedly Mount Vesuvius has been dormant for 50 years and its last eruption produced only a handful of casualties. Admittedly, too, Vesuvius is still most famous for destroying Pompeii and that was rather longer ago, in 79 BC. But the film quotes experts who insist that Vesuvius is not extinct and will erupt again. The questions engaging the scientists' minds are when this is likely to happen and what sort of eruption it will be: a slow-moving and survivable lava flow or the blistering mass of rock and hot ash which smashed Pompeii and could kill millions. There are no simple answers, and you would not expect them, but the excursion back in time to recreate the final days of Pompeii is fascinating.

Dispatches Channel 4, 9.00pm A two-part report on domestic violence by men against women reveals not only an appalling catalogue of brutality but a widespread feeling that the police and the courts are giving women little protection. At the heart of tonight's programme are



Ben Elton returns (BBC1, 10.20)

the testimonies of victims, and their beatings seem all the worse for being provoked by such trivial acts as leaving the dumplings out of a casserole. The abuse does not stop with punches. One woman was forced to eat her meals off the floor and another had to ask her husband's permission to go to the lavatory. Many women are too scared to go to the police for fear of yet another beating. They complain that when they do report incidents no effective action is taken, though some police forces have launched initiatives to deal with the problem.

The Ben Elton Show BBC1, 10.20pm Now here is a funny thing, or at least we hope so (no previous tapes were available). Ben Elton is joined in his new series by none other than Ronnie Corbett, and the words chalk and cheese spring to mind. Both in their spheres are adept performers but nothing obviously connects Elton's abrasive stand-up routines and Corbett's gently meandering armchair monologues. But it may be that since his last BBC show, *The Man From Auntie*, Elton has mellowed. He mentioned on his *Face to Face* interview that he was cutting down on swear words, while his sitcom *The Thin Blue Line* has hardly made the disgusted of Turnbridge Wells red with rage. The show also has a regular spot for Roy and HG, the Australian comedians from the larger advert, and for bands to feature their new releases. Peter Waymark

Blind Man on the Rampage Radio 4, 9.30am This excellent series by Peter White, the BBC's disability correspondent, has been offering some rare insights into what being blind really means, without ever acquiring the nuances of special pleading. There is some pleading, and rightly so given some of society's attitudes to disability, but the pleading always serves the reinforcement of evidence. Today White tackles commuting. The white stick which signals the arrival of a blind person to the seeing world becomes, for White and no doubt other blind people, as much a weapon as a guide and a warning. White teaches us a lesson or two about helping the blind: apparently we are good at showing blind people to trains but we abandon them when they need to find a seat.

Power and the Press Radio 4, 8.00pm There are a number of useful signposts for the Blair administration in this series, presented by Anthony Howard of *The Times*, though history suggests that most of them will be missed or ignored. Downing Street may wish to take particular note of tonight's programme, which covers the 1950s and 1970s, thus incorporating the last time Britain had a Labour administration, Harold Wilson. Prime Minister (1964-70/1974-76), though he understood the press and indeed was on good terms with Fleet Street in the early days. But it was all to end in tears and recrimination. Edward Heath (1970-74) was more consistent: he disliked the press at the start and disliked it just as much, if not even more, by the end. Peter Barnard

RADIO 1 6.30am Kawn Greening and Zoe Ball 9.00 Chris Moyles 12.00 Jo Whitey. Includes 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Desi Peano. Includes 5.45 Newsbeat 6.30 The Evening Session 8.30 Live Music Update 8.40 John Peel 10.30 Breakfast on Tour. Mary Anne Hobbs visits Belfast 1.00am Buz Jam 2.00 Charlie Jordan 4.00 Cive Warren

RADIO 2 6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 8.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Jimmy Young 1.30pm Debbie Thresher 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 John Dunn 7.00 David Allen's Country Club 8.00 Paul Jones 8.00 The Denise Williams Show 8.30 The News 9.00 News 9.30 Take 4 from Here 11.30 Richard Allinson 12.05am Steve Madden 3.00 Alex Lester

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RADIO 3 6.00am On Air, with Petroc Trelawny. Includes reaction to a new Royal Shakespeare Company production at the Pit in the Barbican Centre, London. Plus *Chopin's Opus 25* (Great Overture); Schubert (*Gretchen am Spinnrade*)

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2.00 The BBC Orchestras. BBC National Orchestra of Wales under Gennadiy Rozdovsky and Tadeusz Zieliński with Olivier Charlier, violin. Mozart (*Overture: Così fan tutte*); Britten (*Four Sea Interludes*, Peter Grimes); Mendelssohn (*Violin Concerto in E* minor); Grace Williams (*Sea Sketches*: Brahms (*Symphony No 4 in E minor*))

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FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.8; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 883, 889. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, MW 1053, MW 1053. Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamee.

Cultiva... (Large vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page)



TABLE TENNIS 43

Lomas prepares to take her leave

SPORT

BRYANT'S EYE 46

Runners race to join country set



THURSDAY APRIL 16 1998

Vialli is facing tactical dilemma

Zola holds key to Chelsea's final assault

BY BRIAN GLANVILLE



CHELSEA (probable 4-4-2): E de Goeij... VIALLI (probable 4-4-1-1): P Brivio...

Chelsea's dilemma in the second leg of their Cup Winners' Cup semi-final at Stamford Bridge this evening is unenviable. Should they attack, as they should have done in Vicenza, go for the two goals they need and risk conceding one? Or should they temper their approach with caution knowing, as Gianluca Vialli, their player-manager does, that so long as a game remains goalless, there is always hope of a late, saving strike - the implication here being that Vialli himself remains undecided.

that his team will be looking to score at least once tonight and he is convinced that they can do it. He may well be right. Chelsea's defence is not the most secure, especially through the middle, unforced errors are not rare and only the athletic goalkeeping of the much-improved Ed de Goeij kept Vicenza at bay in the first leg - as, indeed, it had in Seville against Real Betis in the quarter-finals.



Groundstaff clear water from the covers at Cambridge, where the weather was the undoubted winner. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

Sport battered by snow and floods

BY SIMON WILDE

THE freak weather conditions are threatening to make a mockery of the sporting programme. A golf tournament was delayed for several hours yesterday because of snow, the opening fixtures of the new cricket season saw no action at all and a race meeting at Pontefract was lost because of waterlogged ground.

the most preposterous. Play was called off early in the day at both The Parks, where Oxford University are taking on Sussex, and at Fenner's, where Cambridge University and Northamptonshire are unlikely to take the field today either.

ties could be Sussex's bold plan to stage a floodlit match at Hove on Tuesday, when the forecasters are suggesting that evening temperatures could be only slightly above freezing.

League game with Lancashire, being abandoned. Play at Canterbury tomorrow is in the balance because of a sodden outfield, and the grounds at Derby and Headingley began yesterday under snow.

Gregory optimistic that Villa will keep Staunton

BY RICHARD HOBSON

STEVE STAUNTON is moving ever closer to pledging his future to Aston Villa with John Gregory, the Villa manager, meeting Staunton's representatives for talks today.

Staunton, who has been linked with moves to Tottenham Hotspur and Lazio, the Serie A side, twice rejected offers from Brian Little, Gregory's predecessor.

gradually coming to terms with the changes. George Graham, the Leeds United manager, placed Rod Wallace on the transfer list earlier in the year as he sought a fee, however slight, for a player who, like Staunton, can leave for nothing at the end of the season.

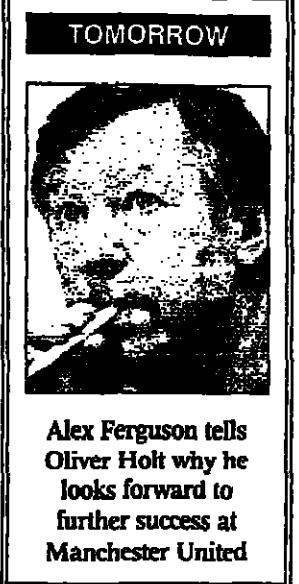
Crossword puzzle grid with clues and solutions.

- ACROSS: 1 Think over (8), 2 (Liquid) ooze out (4), 3 Cheeky (13), 4 Crude but adequate (5-3-5), 5 Conditional early release (6), 6 All leave (stage dir.) (6), 7 Somewhat: for preference (6), 8 Amphibious snare (4), 9 Olympic city, 2004 (6), 10 Proficient people (6), 11 Play on words (3), 12 Rotatory force (6), 13 Game tile with spots (6), 14 Gave temporarily (4), 15 Jewish linked-triangle motif (4,2,5), 16 Brawl: start to wear (4), 17 Idle type (3), 18 Compare unlike features (8), 19 Amalgam, 10 Toast, 20 Quick way (5-3), 21 Ejection: sure to (anag.) (6), 22 Excavation pit: once hunted (6), 23 Eg wing, flipper, leg (4)

THE TIMES BOOKSHOP advertisement for crossword titles.



Zola: keen to impress the Italy manager



Alex Ferguson tells Oliver Holt why he looks forward to further success at Manchester United

LOWEST COST LIFE INSURANCE advertisement with rates table and contact information.

Vertical sidebar advertisement for Princess and Westland, featuring a helicopter image.